

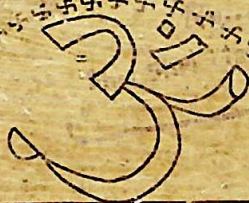
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GRAPH

No. 7

*A Challenge of Religion
For Discovery of Truth*



ROLE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

P. M. VERMA

* * * * *

VISHAL BHARAT SERIES

*Published by The Indian National Renaissance Society,
Anoop Bhawan, Mumfordgunj,
Allahabad, (U. P.), India.*

What
THE INDIAN NATIONAL RENAISSANCE SOCIETY
Stands For ?

The aims and objects of the Society are:

- (a) To raise the moral tone of the community by weaning the educated intelligentsia from the *tridosha* (triple sins) of agnosticism, atheism and materialism;
- (b) To educate public opinion in the role of Vedanta as Universal Religion and as Science of Self-realization;
- (c) To promote interest in the ideals of ancient Indo-Aryan culture with a view to bring about a synthesis of all that is best in the Eastern and Western civilisations;
- (d) To promote the ideal of World Federation, and bring about unification and consolidation of all national forces for establishing Greater Undivided India;
- (e) To strive for political reform by a reform of the legislatures and the electoral system; and
- (f) To publish journals, treatises, periodicals, pamphlets and other literature with a view to achieve the aforesaid aims and objects of the Society.

RULE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

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No.....

By Shri Sri Anandmayee Ashram

BANARAS

P.M. VERMA M.A. B.Sc., LL.B.

Author of 'Role of Vedanta As Universal Religion And Science of Self-Realization'; 'The Coming Renaissance'; 'The Labour Problem'; 'Democracy, Communism and Welfare State Through Indian Eyes'; 'World Wars—Why And Whither?; etc.

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ॐ भूर् भुवः स्वः

तत्सवितुर्वरेण्यं भर्गो देवस्य धीमहि ।

धियो योनः प्रचोद्यात् ॥

"We contemplate that adorable glory of the Supreme Creator of this universe—that is in the earth, the sky, the heavens. May He stimulate our higher intelligence (in the pursuit of true knowledge)!"
(Rg. III. 62-10; also S. and Yajur)

उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।

क्षुरस्थ धारा निशितादुरत्यया ।

दुर्गं पथस्तत् कवयो वदन्ति ॥

"Arise ! Awake ! having attained thy boons know THAT. Like the sharp edge of a razor, the sages say, is the path, Narrow, it is, and difficult to tread !"

[Katha up. (I. iii. 14)]

सकृज् ज्ञानेन मुक्तिः स्यात् सम्यग् ज्ञाने स्वयं गुरुः ।

"He who knows the truth only once, attains salvation. He who knows truth completely at all times, is a *Guru* himself, that is, can save others from *Samsar*, the round of birth and rebirth."

निजात्म तत्त्व बोधनम् । जगज्जनैक मंगलम् ॥

अनादि साधनाधनम् । गुरोः कृपाहि केवलम् ॥

विमोह कामशासनम् । त्रितापपाप नाशनम् ॥

तमो विनाश कज्जलम् । गुरोः कृपाहि केवलम् ॥

"For attaining self-realization and for the good of the people of the world, the wealth of eternal *Sadhana* surely lies in *Guru's* Grace only. For controlling attachment and lust, and for destroying sins and the three afflictions (of body, mind and natural calamities) and for dispelling dark clouds of *Tamas*, the remedy lies in *Guru's* Grace only."

'May God's light illuminate us,

May His wisdom guide us,

May His love enfold us,

May His strength sustain us,

May His peace pervade us,

May His beauty shine out through us."

—Mrs. P. A. Hertnell
Brede, Rye, Sussex.

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Not.....

Shri Sri Sri Anandamayee Ashram
BANARAS.

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PREFACE

In this Age of Science, which is another name for unbelief, even God Almighty needs propaganda. The need is, indeed, greater with the so-called educated people—the mass products of our over-crowded Universities—whose education mainly consists of vast information about things of the world, but who have had no time to think for themselves about their own “selves” and the deeper values of life and things moral or spiritual. Our State also aims at imparting secular education, which inevitably leads to increased desire for higher standards of living—the desire increasing in geometrical progression as the means to satisfy it increase in arithmetical progression—with the result that every expansion of education leads to greater and greater discontent and dissatisfaction, and thus sub-serves as an indirect propaganda for the materialistic philosophy of the Communist, however much we may otherwise condemn it.

“Having achieved *Swaraj*, if we want our country to attain to her ancient glory, we must lay the foundations of a spiritual democracy in our schools by introducing a course of comparative study of religions, emphasising the essential unity of all religions and universal principles of ethics and morality.”

This is what I wrote in 1959 in the Preface to my work, ‘*Role of Vedanta*.’ I have since realized the need for bringing out a smaller introductory work for wider circulation. It is to fulfil that need that I prepared these lectures, and have divided them into two Volumes: (1) ‘*Rule of Righteousness*’ which was the title of an article contributed by me in the Spring, 1961, issue of a British Quarterly Journal, ‘*The Voice Universal*.’ (2) ‘*Goal of Immortality*’ which was the title of another article of mine that appeared as a Serial in a Bombay magazine, ‘*The Call Divine*.’

The Object

My object in compiling these lectures was stated by me at an inaugural meeting of the Vedanta Academy held on 7-1-1962.

at the K. P. University College Hall as follows:—

"This meeting recalls to my mind the last address I was invited to deliver in this very Hall about 12 years ago on March 12, 1950, by Dr. B. R. Saxena on '*Future of Democracy under the Indian Republican Constitution.*' That was soon after the commencement of the Constitution on 26-1-1950. In that address, which had received some publicity in the public press, I suppose, I was the first to raise my voice against the provision of Article 28 of our Constitution, which laid down that no religious instruction shall be provided in any educational institution wholly maintained out of State funds, inasmuch as it was anti-Indian in spirit, for this ancient land of Bharatavarsha, called '*Karma-Bhumi*' or '*Tapo-Bhumi*' is practically wedded to religion, and to shut out all religious instruction instead of providing for the teaching of the general tenets of all religions or of a Universal Religion like our Vedanta Philosophy, is, indeed, paying a great compliment to the Constitution of Soviet Russia. "It goes to show," I had further remarked, "that the framers of our Constitution have only paid lip homage to our ancient civilisation, and were, in fact, thoroughly westernised in their outlook."

"It is only of late that our Government seems to have realized the need of imparting religious education in public schools, and appointed a Commission under the Chairmanship of hon. Sri Sri Prakasa, Governor of Maharashtra, who submitted a report last year, but goodness only knows how long Government may take to implement the recommendations of that Commission. We have had as many as eleven amendments of the Constitution during the last decade, but Government has not yet seen its way to get Art. 28 of the Constitution amended. No wonder, therefore, that this apathy toward religion has resulted in our growing generation fast losing the grip of our old moorings and drifting toward the whirlpool of anarchy and chaos so far as our national and spiritual regeneration as a civilised people is concerned."

I had also written in the Preface to my work, '*Role of*

Vedanta that it was compiled with a view to wean to educated intelligentsia of the present Intellectual Age from what one may call the '*tridosha*' (triple sins) of agnosticism, atheism and Materialism. The same remarks apply to this work. As was observed by Bharat-Ratna Dr. S. Radhakrishnan in his Punjab University Convocation Address delivered in December, 1930:—

"A kind of new materialism has overtaken us.... We are willing to use all our intellectual resources ruthlessly in the service of one end—material success. We are prepared to lay down our lives for higher wages and not higher ideals. We seem to have almost a superstitious reverence for material conditions."

Under the glamour of scientific intellectualism of the West we are fast losing the grip of our ancient moorings—our civilisation with all its emphasis on morality, catholicity and spirituality. Our university education must bear the impress of the truly Indian spirit that stands for synthesis and is averse to a competitive approach. I hope these introductory lectures will help to achieve that object.

P. M. VERMA.

'AISH MAHAL'
ASHOKA ROAD
ALLAHABAD CANTT. (U. P.) INDIA.
D/- 1.9.1962.



RULE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

I. CIVILISATION—EASTERN AND WESTERN VIEWS

Men may hold different views of civilisation, but all will agree that it is the antithesis of barbarism or that savage state when people behave no better than beasts.

Norman Cousins, Editor of the *Saturday Review*, of New York, wrote a small book in 1945, with the title '*Modern Man is Obsolete*.' After analysing the various implications that flowed from Hiroshima bombing, he remarked: (P. 11)

"If this reasoning is correct, then modern man is obsolete, a self-made anachronism, becoming more incongruous by the minute. He has exalted change, in everything but himself. He has leaped centuries ahead in inventing a new world to live in, but he knows little or nothing about his own part in that world. He has surrounded and confounded himself with gaps—gaps between revolutionary technology and evolutionary man, between cosmic gadgets and human wisdom, between intellect and conscience. The struggle between science and morals that Henry Thomas Buckle foresaw a century ago has been all but won by Science."

Our present-day Intellectual Age has so far failed to evolve a civilisation based on moral order because it suffers from Purposelessness, and has not been able to find a rational basis for ethical values, e.g., why man should be good and virtuous? The problem of problems before the world of today is—how to save humanity from itself, how to quell the beast in man and how to attain and retain peace? Modern man has neither outward security nor inward peace. Uncertainty, suspicion and fear are deepening human misery. The masses are exploited morally and spiritually with an utter disregard for the welfare of humanity. The growing lust for power, the misuse of authority, has crippled our civilisation. Never before was man so

much overtaken by fear of his own kind. Socialism is developing totalitarian tendencies, and striking a blow at its very root. As a result of increasing reliance on the rule of law, people are deprived of their real strength of self-reliance, and losing their initiative. The idea of 'No service without power' warps their mind and their social conscience becomes more and more blunted. The feeling of sharing in a common adventure is conspicuous by its absence. As centralisation proceeds apace, the hold of the bureaucracy goes on increasing. Politics degenerates into party or power-politics wherein truth is the first casualty. The race for power between different nations or blocks tends to lead to greater centralisation and concentration of power, and heavier armaments, and people get used to all kinds of economic controls and regimented life. Threats of annihilation by means of rockets and ballistic inter-continental missiles shooting at a supersonic speed are being held out as a war deterrent.

In spite of more amenities and plentiful production, an emptiness is fast penetrating people's life, and the zest in life is missing. There is a growing indifference toward the neighbour. "A great city," said the Romans, "is a desert." The anonymity of city dwellers presents a serious sociological problem. The factories have changed the moral code. Man has become a machine. He moves like a spinning top, and the speed with which he moves leaves him no time for prayer, or to think of morality and spirituality. He has lost faith in God, and his necessities have increased a hundred-fold, so he must earn more and more, and work ceaselessly for his survival until he breaks down. No wonder, therefore, the factories make the common man more and more self-centred and grabbing—a nation of commercial-minded petty-fogging shop-keepers quite incapable of thinking of the higher values of life. Man today is befooled by his civilisation, his own creation, and is bewildered by his achievements in scientific progress. A pleasure-seeking civilisation based on self-interest is short-lived and has no future.

In the West, the very idea of 'Progress' is modern; some hold that the very word was unknown in the medieval period. It signifies a scientific advance making for an increased pro-

duction of material wealth and a higher standard of living. The hoary East, on the other hand, has always drawn a distinction between man's progress and industrial progress, between inner progress and outer progress: the one in human nature, human ideas and ideals, and the other in aggregations of our material wealth and possessions—deeming the one as the end and the other not even a means to that end. That is why we find in the East while the idea of inner progress seems to be over-emphasised, that of the outer is rather neglected.

The modern conception of 'Progress' differs radically from that which our ancient law-givers had. The latter held the view that our real progress lay in the pursuit of ideals, in the striving after goodness, and the realization of Truth or the Ultimate Reality, for which the quest lay not outside but within us—within our very "selves." They sought for higher values, and concentrated their attention on the inner richness of life: how to develop human personality, reform human nature, and raise human consciousness to a level above that of physical pain and suffering. They aimed at minimizing of our physical wants. They sought not for the fleeting pleasures of the senses, but for the attainment of abiding happiness which lay in harmony, in unity with one's Self, in a contented mind, and in the peace resident in the soul.

As observed by Sir Jean Herbert in his article on 'Relationship between East and West':

"An essential and profound difference worthy of consideration is this: Orientals are more anxious to apply their moral, psychic and spiritual powers to the discovery, conquest and exploitation of the world within than to employ their physical and intellectual energy in the discovery, conquest and exploitation of the world without. In India children imitate their parents and play at meditation. If a Western child sits motionless, dreaming, its parents rush, crying: "What is the matter? Are you ill? Don't sit like that; go and play with your friends." The Western child builds castles out of sand; the Hindu child builds temples.

"Mastering the forces of external nature and turning rivers, electricity, gravity, nuclear energy, vitamins and hormones into our servants, does indeed represent immense progress; it has become possible to provide every human being with food, clothing, shelter and protection from illness. But we do not seem to have any clear idea as to what in fact constitutes happiness—and happiness is after all the ultimate object of our efforts, whether we admit it or not. When we ask a Westerner the question, "What do you want of life?" the most frank answer we are likely to get is "I want to be happy." If we go on to ask, "What would make you happy?" he will nearly always mention some unfulfilled desire, the satisfaction of which, as he well knows, would only bring him a partial and transitory contentment accompanied by privations and disillusionment likely to stimulate new desires. This vicious circle has come to be exploited systematically for purposes of development known as economic, in one sense only of the term. In order to live in plenty, that is, to have the means of satisfying our needs—we must produce plenty; to produce plenty—find outlets, markets; to create these—develop the maximum needs among the maximum number of people. The aim of advertising and salesmanship, a major industry in the West, is to create needs, either for new articles or for the replacements of those stated to be worn out?

"Concentration of attention on the inner life leads almost inevitably to a recognition of the superiority of spiritual values over material values. Much as one would deplore the unfortunate effects of this attitude upon the material standard of living, upon economic or political independence and upon health and longevity, it must be admitted as constructive for inner equilibrium, psychological perspicacity, and moral and spiritual strength. People of the West are rightly sorry for those who have nothing to eat; but many Orientals reserve their sympathy for those who know not how to pray. "Religion", the Jains say, "is the highest form of happiness; non-violence self-control and penitence are its constituent elements." In Asia I have often been the subject of a reproach deserved by many other Westerners: "You worry too much

about what you do and not enough about what you are." All Hindus understood that Gandhi was in earnest when he said: "If you are concerned in a murder, it is better to be the victim than the murderer."

"The relative importance of qualitative and quantitative values is closely related. The West has a tendency, clearly shown by its American vanguard, only to appreciate matters which can be expressed in figures, and even to be incapable of understanding matters which cannot. Visiting a library, a hospital, a theatre, a museum or a laboratory, we are at once overwhelmed with statistics: the number of books, beds or seats, records showing the institution as first, or at worst second, in the world, country or town; the overall corridor space, the number of square feet of window glass; the number of consultations; the amount of capital invested, and so on *ad infinitum*. Furthermore, the West even attempts to express qualitative values in figures.

"What is the Oriental attitude in this respect? We are apt to think it vague, nebulous and rather impractical. A true teacher does not seek to gather round him the greatest possible number of pupils or disciples, but to maintain and raise the quality of the group to whom he transmits his knowledge. The Hindu is totally indifferent to what we call historical chronology. The Moslem bases purely commercial dealings much more upon the confidence inspired by him in the other party than upon detailed contracts. Poverty, even complete destitution, is held in honour all over the East; it is often the cherished fulfilment of life-long labour. Countless examples could be given to show that in the East quantitative values are regarded, if not with disdain, at least as being much inferior to the qualitative which we are tempted to relegate to second place.

"This obsession with the quantitative is related to another tendency more or less specifically apparent in the West, that of compartmentation—the fundamental opposition of Self and not-Self, the contrast between one's own and other groups; the thorough isolation of science,

religion, philosophy, spirituality, ethics and practical life; insurmountable boundaries between God, man, the animal world and nature; the extreme specialisation of scientific research and professional activity; distinction between individual and public morals; such a rigorous classification of natural forces and objects that we feel almost offended when any element refuses to fit into one or other of our categories.

"A need for analysis before synthesis, and for considered discrimination before action, is a natural and indispensable characteristic of human nature. But a constant effort towards reunion, both without and within, should accompany such division. After all, a human being constitutes a whole just as much as an aircraft or a wireless set does, and each of the elements—physical, emotional, volitional, intellectual and moral, is only effective and useful in so far as it is in harmony with the whole; it can only be understood and employed in relation to the whole."

For all our vaunted progress, we find if good increases in life in arithmetical progression, evil increases in geometrical progression, and the world today is as far from being a pleasure garden, and as full of pain and suffering, as ever it was.

According to a press report dated May 24, 1959 from Washington, it cost the American people 20,000 million dollars (about £7,143 million sterling) a year to fight crime, and that there was a shocking increase in the number of crimes committed in U. S. A., almost 24 per cent over the annual average for the preceding five years, and about four times greater than the annual rate of increase in population.

According to a press report from Washington, dated July 13, 1962, the crime figures collected by the Federal Bureau of Investigation showed that the crime rate growth continued to outstrip population growth by nearly 5 to 1. The press report appeared under the caption, 'Four major crimes a minute in U. S. A.' The number of serious crimes in 1961 was estimated at 1,926,090, which was a 3 per cent

increase over the previous record set in 1960. It would indeed be a poor consolation to find prosperity, health and education keeping pace with the growth in population, when crimes increase in the ratio 5:1. Thus the total picture of life is almost too painful for contemplation. Life depends on our not knowing it too well.

In so far as man has learnt to fly up in an aeroplane or dive deep into the sea in his sub-marines, his performance is nothing as compared to that of birds and fish. But in his death-dealing inventions he has left the beasts of prey far behind. With each stride of progress made by science, beginning from the age of gunpowder and steel to that of machine-guns, tanks, bombers, super-fortresses and ballistic missiles and rockets carrying nuclear bombs, true civilization has gone on receding into the background, and the horrors of a total war have now reached but a fitting climax and culminating point in the unprecedented terrorism of the atom bomb. We may here profitably quote the following indictment of modern progress in the words of Bernard Shaw put in the mouth of the Devil from his drama, *'Man and Superman'*:—

“...And I tell you that in the arts of life man invents nothing ; but in the arts of death he outdoes Nature herself, and produces by Chemistry and machinery all the slaughter of plague, pestilence, and famine. The peasant I tempt to-day eats and drinks what was eaten and drunk by the peasants of ten thousand years ago; and the house he lives in has not altered as much as in a thousand centuries as the fashion of a lady's bonnet in a score of weeks. But when he goes out to slay, he carries a marvel of mechanism and lets loose at the touch of his fingers all the hidden molecular energies, and leaves the javelin, the arrow, the blow-pipe of his fathers far behind. In the arts of peace Man is a bungler. I have seen his cotton factories and the like, with machinery that a greedy dog could have invented if it had wanted money instead of food. I know his clumsy typewriters and bungling locomotives and tedious bicycles: they are toys compared to the Maxim gun and the submarine torpedo boat.

There is nothing in man's industrial machinery but his greed and sloth : his heart is in his weapons. This marvellous force of life of which you boast is a force of Death : Man measures his strength by his destructiveness.....What is his morality ? Gentility ! an excuse for consuming without producing. What is his art ? An excuse for gloating over pictures of slaughter. What are his politics ? Either the worship of a despot because a despot can kill, or a parliamentary cock-fighting. I spent an evening lately in a certain celebrated legislature, and heard the pot lecturing the kettle for its blackness, and ministers answering questions. When I left I chalked upon the door the old nursery saying : "Ask no questions and you will be told no lies." I bought a six-penny family magazine, and found it full of pictures of young men shooting and stabbing one another. I saw a man die : he was a London brick-layer's laborer with seven children. He left seventeen pounds club money ; and his wife spent it all on his funeral and went into the workhouse with the children next day. She would not have spent seven-pence on her children's schooling : the law had to force her to let them be taught gratuitously ; but on death she spent all she had. Their imagination glows, their energies rise up at the idea of death, these people : they love it ; and the more horrible it is the more they enjoy it....In the old chronicles you read of earth-quakes and pestilences, and are told that these showed the power and majesty of God and the littleness of man. Nowadays the chronicles describe battles. In a battle two bodies of men shoot at one another with bullets and explosive shells until one body runs away, when the others chase the fugitives on horse-back and cut them to pieces as they fly. And this, the chronicle concludes, shows the greatness and majesty of empires, and the littleness of the vanquished. Over such battles the people run about the streets yelling with delight, and egg their Governments on to spend hundreds of millions of money in the slaughter, whilst the strongest Ministers dare not spend an extra penny in the pound against and the poverty and pestilence through which they themselves daily walk. I could give you a thousand ins-

tances; but they all come to the same thing : the power that governs the earth is not the power of life but of Death.. The p'ague, the famine, the earth-quake, the tempest were too spasmodic in their action ; the tiger and crocodiles were too easily satiated and not cruel enough; something more constantly, more ruthlessly, more ingeniously destructive was needed, and that something was Man, the inventor of the rack, the stake, the gallows, the electric chair ; of sword and gun and poison gas : above all, of justice, duty, patriotism, and all the other isms by which even those who are clever enough to be humanely disposed are persuaded to become the most destructive of all destroyers.....

....“An epoch is but a swing of the pendulum,; and each generation thinks the world is progressing because it is always moving...there is nothing new under the sun. *Vanitas vanitatum.*”

The same may be said of the Eastern and Western view of happiness. Whereas the Oriental seeks a perennial and abiding source, the Occidental believes in getting what he can out of a transitory life, as is stated in the following remarks quoted from a book of fiction (“*Time And Time Again*” by James Hilton) :—

“But would'nt you have *preferred* to be happy ?”

“Yes, if it could have come from achievement—from triumph. But not from *being*. Not just bliss. The Orientals believe in bliss—and look at them. Whereas, happiness—it's the pursuit they stress, not the happiness itself. The phrase is even written into their Declaration of Independence—and look at *them*. They count.”

“Because they have pursued happiness without finding it ?”

It should be obvious to the meanest intellect that pursuit of pleasure for its own sake can never lead to even a semblance of abiding happiness. Unless man, living in society, accepts the idea of social restraint, no organised civilised society is possible. He must learn to check his impulses, to

restrain himself, and forbear from doing certain things which his mind may prompt him to do, in social interest. The greater the concentration of population, the greater the need, in public interest, for such training and education as would make the average man or woman learn the great lesson of bearing and forbearing.

Who can deny that a happy and healthy home should be the aim and end of civilisation? In the words of Joseph Cook, 'Only the home can found a State.' In fact, States originate and are developed, governments exist, and are maintained by the people, in order that "homes" may be happy; they have no other *raison d'être*. As observed by E. H. Chapin, 'Home is the seminary of all the institutions.' Writers and thinkers of all climes and ages have laid down that there is nothing more sacred than a home. For instance, Montgomery says:—

'Home, the spot of earth supremely blest,

A dearer, sweeter spot than all the rest.'

Goethe says: 'There is a magic in that little word, home; it is a mystic circle that surrounds comforts and virtues never known beyond its hallowed limits.' Pestolozzi says: 'Our home joys are the most delightful earth affords, and the joy of parents in the children is the most holy joy of humanity. It makes their hearts pure and good, it lifts men up to their Father in heaven.' Says a Chinese proverb: 'A hundred men may make an encampment, but it takes a woman to make a home.'

On the contrary, we find, an eminent Psychologist of America, Dr. William Kaufman has observed: (*Chicago Times*—12-1-1954)

"American husbands have to bribe their wives with television set, fur coat, motor car, separate bed room, etc., to get a hot cooked meal after a whole day's toil."

As observed by Aldous Huxley*:

"There are certain American cities in which the number of divorce is equal to the number of marriages. In a few

* (P. 14, 'Brave New World', Pub. Chatto & Windus.

years, no doubt, marriage licences will be sold like dog licences, good for a period of twelve months, with no law against changing dogs or keeping more than one animal at a time. As political and economic freedom diminishes, sexual freedom tends compensatingly to increase."

Judged by any test, we find, the Western civilisation presents today a woeful picture of broken-up, disrupted and blasted homes. About a decade ago, the rate of divorce in America was reported to be one in four marriages. And now a press report dated 14-5-1962 from New York, issued by Dr. Pulglik, Director of the Social Census Bureau says:

"From 1960 Census figures, it has been ascertained that 1 in 14 females (more than 7 per cent of total number of American females, i.e., nearly 50 p. c. of American married women) are divorced from their husbands."

In Britain one marriage breaks up in every 10 minutes. The divorce rate-graph in Britain climbed from 9,970 petitions in 1938 to 18,399 in 1944; 41,704 in 1946 and 47,041 in 1947. The growing belief that there is nothing wrong in sexual relation before marriage and faithlessness after marriage has, according to the findings of the Bishop of Dorchester's Committee, led to an appalling laxity of morals, and this has resulted in disrupted homes, the children being left to their fate. The latest figures, placed before U. S. Congress, of children who had no natural parents are in the neighbourhood of 12 millions in a juvenile population of 45 millions. According to a P. T. I. report from London dated 26-4-1952, illegitimate births reached a record level in 1945—73,000. Dr. Albert Davis, M. D. writes in British Medical Journal dated 15-7-1952: "At Paddington Hospital, nearly 50% of all full term deliveries in the large maternity units are in single women, and a similar proportion exists amongst abortion cases." The *'Spectator'* of February 19, 1954 writes: "In one home, Shaftesbury Homes for unhappy children in England nearly 40,000 children have been taken from "disrupted homes" in the last 100 years."

The British Medical Journal of 25-7-1953 writes, "35% of all girls marrying at 20 or under are pregnant at the time of marriage."

Alfred U. Kinsey writes in his book, *'Sexual Behaviour in the Human Female'*: 'Almost exactly 50 per cent American women and 83 per cent of American men have sexual intercourse before marriage. About 50 per cent of males and 26 per cent of females have extra-marital relations.'

A press report dated 15-12-1950 quotes the following from Evelyn Vangman's article in "Tit-Bit": 'Britain's marriage muddle is creating a new race of jail birds. One man in every eight who goes to prison in England and Wales today is there for non-payment of maintenance order.'

H. G. Wells says: 'Chastity has been replaced by unrestricted sexual freedom. The new generation finds no value in fidelity and no virtue in chastity.' Partington says, 'Virginity no longer exists in England.'

Reuter reports from Vienna on 8-3-1962:

'Official statistics indicate that the average expectation of married life in Budapest is only two years, and in Prague, three years, these figures being based on marriages and divorces in 1959. In East Berlin, the average duration of marriages, based on statistics of the same year, is four years. Poland has a relatively stable family life with an average marriage lasting 18 years. Poland is followed by Bulgaria (11 years), Russia (9 years), Czechoslovakia and Rumania (6 years), Hungary (5 to 6 years) and Albania (3 years). Signs of concern are particularly apparent in Hungary where 1 in 2 marriages ends in divorce.'

In the issue of *Chicago Times*, dated 25-4-1955, we have the following report from its Correspondent in Sweden:—

"Statistics show that there are at least 27,000 unmarried mothers...Fully 10% of the babies are illegitimate..... About 5,000 women, married and unmarried, are admitted to hospitals each year for legal abortions.

'In the pages of a Stockholm paper, in a typical one of a series of interviews being printed under the title 'Swedish Youth Speaks,' I found:

"I have no real morals," said the boy of 19, "And I

would never marry a girl because I had made her pregnant. Why should I give up my liberty for the sake of a child."

According to a P. T. I. report from Rome:—

"Two and a half million Italians were born as illegitimate children since the turn of the century. They form about five per cent of the Italian population. About one million children are born in Italy each year. In the last few years about 30,000 of these have been illegitimate. This comparatively low proportion is achieved, however, at the cost of frequent tragedies. Everyday the newspapers, with blunt and colourful details, record the suicide of some young girls. The recovery of women's bodies from the swirling yellow waters of the river Tiber has become almost routine for the Roman police. An average of 4,000 people a year have committed suicide in Italy over the last six years. Unofficial figures estimate that more than half of these were women under the age of 30."

As against this dismal picture of Western civilisation, we have a very different picture of an Indian home in the following words of the late Prof. C. F. Andrews*:

"It is when we come to the inner circle of the family, that we reach the true secret of India's greatness and find the highest mark of spiritual influence. This lies in the ideal of the true life, so intimately bound up at every point with religion, and the reverence of man for woman as the 'mother' with its counter-part of wifely devotion, giving the profoundest unity of all. Marriage, in India, has become a sacrament of renunciation. The womanhood of India, more than anything else, has kept the sacramental view of life whole and undefiled. By the Hindu woman's utter and absolute self-devotion, going even to the extravagant lengths of *Sati*, she has maintained religious idealism secure, and set forth an infinite and unbounded sacrifice before the eyes of man. Thus man, in his turn,

* Taken from an article 'The Body of Humanity' in *Viswabharati Quarterly Journal*, Jan. 1925).

has been drawn away from the world to the religious life, and has found in his old age no satisfaction except in the Eternal.'

The fact that the ideal of chastity and fidelity has been commonly practised by the women of India may be illustrated by the following recorded story of over hundred years ago:—

'In 1851, in a place called Putia in the district of Rajshahi in Bengal, Rani Sarat Sundari was the wife of the Zamindar of the place, Jogendra Narayan. Jogendra Narayan suddenly died in the prime of his life. The Rani was a wise and a sensible girl. In her sixteenth year, when she got the control of her husband's estate from the Court of Wards, she managed it with much tact and foresight. Attracted by good reports about her many virtues, the wife of the then Collector of Rajshahi, Mr. Wallace, came one day to visit the Rani. Mrs. Wallace was very much moved by the sight of the Rani, so young, yet her head tonsured, with a coarse piece of cloth on her person, and seated on a blanket like a member of a religious order. She could not restrain her emotion. Full of affection, she said, "Rani, you are still quite young, why don't you marry again?" Sarat Sundari did not give any reply to the question, but her eyes began to shed profuse tears. Knowing that she had unknowingly hurt the Rani's feelings, Mrs. Wallace felt much grieved and left the palace with much expression of regret. The Rani was, however, much upset. She thought there could be no greater sin for a Hindu woman than to be told that she should marry, and as an expiation she undertook a fast of several days during which she did not touch even a drop of water.'

In the West, the institution of marriage is treated with levity and is associated with lasciviousness. Nobody now believes what the scriptures say: 'Marriages are made in heaven.' Or, as Shakespeare says, 'Hanging and wiving go by destiny.' Or, as Johnson wrote, 'I believe marriages would in general be as happy, and often more so, if they were all made by the Lord Chancellor, upon a due consideration of the characters and circumstances, without the parties having any choice in the matter.' Or, as Bernard Shaw says, 'What God

hath joined together no man should put asunder. God will take care of that.' On the contrary, the institution of marriage is considered to be one of which Emerson wrote: 'Is not marriage an open question, when it is alleged, from the beginning of the world, that such as are in the institution wish to get out, and such as are out wish to get in?' Or, as Bernard Shaw has satirically put it in his drama '*Man and Superman*':

"Look at fashionable society as you know it. What does it pretend to be? An exquisite dance of nymphs. What is it? A horrible procession of wretched girls, each in the claws of a cynical, cunning, avaricious, disillusioned, ignorantly experienced, foul-minded old woman whom she calls mother, and whose duty it is to corrupt her mind and sell her to the highest bidder. Why do these unhappy slaves marry anybody, however old and vile, sooner than not marry at all? Because marriage is their only means of escape from these decrepit fiends who hide their selfish ambitions, their jealous hatreds of the young rivals who have supplanted them, under the mask of maternal duty and family affection. Such things are abominable: the voice of nature proclaims for the daughter a father's care and for the son a mother's."

Again, Shaw writes, 'Marriage is popular because it combines the maximum of temptation with the maximum of opportunity.' Or, as we have from another writer, Charles Reade: 'Marriage is a medicine which acts differently on good men and good women—She does not love him quite enough—Cure,—marriage—He loves her a little too much—Cure,—marriage.'

In the West, the young people choose their own partners, but in India the custom is for parents to arrange for their children's marriages. Which is the better method of the two? On this question being put to an illumined one,* the reply was:—

"Parents love their children and are eager to see them

* Sree Sree Anandamayee Ma (Vide '*Anandavarta*' Varanasi, Vol. V, No. 1.

happy; besides they have the advantage of many years of experience of the *Grihasthashrama* (house-holder's life). Young people are likely to be deluded by mere physical attraction which is temporary. Love marriages are therefore often a failure. Marriage that is arranged by wise parents is best.

"Parents have a very good chance of knowing intuitively what is right for their children and they will think very carefully before deciding on their child's husband and wife, and children (in India at least) have great faith that whatever their parents do is for their best. Moreover, the *mantra* which is pronounced at the wedding to unite them and the ceremony itself establish a bond between couple. Their union is consecrated to God and the wife is called the husband's *Sahdharmini* (sharer in holy works). Their life together is meant to help them toward the goal of human life which is Self-realization.....The ideal marriage which in our days can hardly be found at all is when after one or two sons and daughters have been born, husband and wife adopt the *Vanaprasthashrama*, and live together like brother and sister. The Rishis of ancient times were married and had children. They lived as what is called 'married *Brahmacharies*.'

According to ancient Indian tradition, the woman, being supposed to be the guardian-angel of the virtue of chastity, and hence above all carnal desires, is deemed to be practically infallible, and so the parents practically exercise the right of selecting for their daughter a suitable husband to whom she may dedicate her life: thus, in the words of Tolstoy, "making the first fall the final fall from the Ideal of Chastity." Every woman is expected to marry and establish a home. That is the highest sacrament laid down for a woman by our ancient law-givers; and the giving of a daughter in marriage (*Kanya-danam*) is deemed to be an act of highly meritorious charity (*Mahadanam*).

The position of the woman in the Hindu joint family is not merely that of perpetual tutelage to the man—the father, the husband, and the son in successive periods of her life—as generally misinterpreted in a Western terminology, which

is the outcome of the competitive economism of the West, but according to Eastern synthetic philosophy the woman's field of work and functions and duties of life nowhere collide or come in violent contact against those of the men, and hence the woman enjoys a large degree of independence in her own department of work. No doubt, she needs protection all her life, but her selfless service and sacrifice at the altar of the family is such that it becomes a privilege of the male members of the family to protect her. In her life she fully realises the Ideal, as observed by Rousseau: "The dignity of woman consists in being unknown to the world. Her glory is the esteem of her husband, her pleasure the happiness of her family." That is why the Hindu woman is epitomised as *Lakshmi*, the Goddess of wealth, *Gauri*, the Goddess of Chastity, *Saraswati*, the Goddess of Learning, besides being called *Shakti*, the Goddess of Creative Force. Bernard Shaw says, "Vitality in a woman is a blind fury of creation." The true test of civilisation is how far that blind fury of creation is held in restraint and regulated by means of self-discipline and directed toward the preservation of the race and the ultimate goal of Self or God-realization. In the words of Marquis of Zetland, "It is time to recognise that man's outlook has become unbalanced because his progress on the physical plane has out-stripped his advance along the moral and spiritual planes. It is a fatal mistake to regard civilisation as a by-product of economic progress whereas the essence of civilisation is a restraint imposed by divine law or by reason upon the instincts of man."

G. W. Curtis says, "The test of civilisation is the estimate of woman." Let us see what Manu, the law-giver, says about women:—

शोचन्ति जामयो यत्र विनश्यन्त्याशु तत् कुलम् ।
न शोचन्ति तु यत्रेता वद्धन्ते तद्धि सर्वदा ॥

(मनु ३/५७)

"When the women folk are unhappy, the family perishes with its forefathers, and where they are happy the family flourishes and goes from prosperity to prosperity."

प्रजनार्थं महाभागाः पूजार्हा गृहदीप्तयः ।
स्त्रियः श्रियश्च गृहेषु न विशेषोऽस्तिकश्चन ॥

(मनु ९/२६)

“As the wives bear offsprings, they are to be worshipped and to be looked upon as the real resplendence of the home. So much so, that there should be no difference between a wife and Goddess Lakshmi (Goddess of Wealth) Herself.”

पितृभिर्भ्रातृभिरश्चैताः पतिभिर्देवरैस्तथा ।
पूज्या भूपयित व्याश्च बहु कल्याणमीप्सुभिः ॥
यत्र नार्यस्तु पूज्यन्ते रमन्ते तत्र देवताः ।
यत्रेतास्तु न पूज्यन्ते संव्रास्तत्राफलाः क्रिया ॥

(मनु ३/५५-५६)

“The father, the brother, the husband, the husband’s brother, in a word all the male relations must worship the female folk with adornment if they desire immense good fortune, happiness and prosperity, because the house-hold in which women are worshipped is the abode of gods, and where women are not worshipped, performance of Dharma becomes impossible and all the good works become futile.”

The following text of Yajnavalkya Smriti should be read in the light of the above texts:—

रक्षते कन्यां पिता विद्वां, पतिः पुत्रास्तु वार्षके ।
अभावे ज्ञातयस्तेषां स्वातन्त्रं न क्वचित्स्त्रिया ॥

“A woman is never independent. In the married state she is under the protection of her father, and after her marriage this responsibility shifts to her husband, who at an advanced age transfers his duties to his son.”

In England, there is a saying current:—

“A wife, a dog, and a chestnut tree,

The more you beat them, the better will they be.”

In India, the rule according to a Sanskrit text is, ‘Strike not even with a flower (पुष्पेनासि), a wife guilty of a thousand faults.’

There should, however, be no question of inequality between sexes when the man and the woman have merged

themselves into a single unity and a religiously inviolable union of life. One is the complement of the other, and therefore, as Ruskin observed: 'The one completes the other,' because their functions fall widely apart. While it is for man to guard the woman from all perils and hardships of out-door life, within the house he is ruled by her, for it is her great privilege to make a real home, and in so far as it is not this, it is not home.

Under the caption 'Inequality has its charms' the following news item appearing in '*Globe*' goes to show how the mind of the Western woman is now turning away from her claim to equality between sexes:—

'New York, April 21—American women, long regarded as the most pampered in the world, have reacted violently to a Bill for equal rights which is now before Congress.

'They say quite frankly that they do not want equal rights, and that they are more than satisfied with the present inequalities which give them a very strong advantage against men.

'The film star, Lucille Ball, has entered the arena as the spokesman of the anti-equalitarians. She says with engaging guile: "The whole thing is ridiculous. Women have far too many rights as it is. They ought to put the Bill in the reverse, and take away some of the rights which women already have. There are times when I like to be mastered—and which woman doesn't? It makes us feel feminine."

'Lucille is getting a great deal of support from American women who realize that their air of frailty brings out the protective instincts of the American male—and his wallet.'

This is but a natural reaction of the modern women of whom an American philosopher wrote:

"She commercialises her beauty, in marriage or without; who drives hard bargains in luxury and finery for her love; who spends her day in resting, primping, powdering,

curling and dressing and her nights in amusement and flirtation. In all the varied panorama of modern life there is nothing so offensive as the expensive idleness of these women. They have few children or none but they need many servants; they have no function, but they have endless needs; they specialise in the art of doing nothing in a thousand ways. The effect is to force the men to a nerve-racking pace of toil and to a bitter consciousness that his significance is merely that of a commissary clerk."

In contrast with the above account of the modern woman, we may quote the following account of a well-to-do Indian family given by John Seymour after his visit to India in 1953 :—

"I wanted to see what India was really like.....

Shortly after I got there I stayed for a few weeks with a fairly wealthy family in Madras. The man was a businessman—a Mudaliyar by caste—and we called him by his nickname of Choti. He spoke English as often as he spoke Tamil but was completely Indian in outlook. He had a pretty palatial house—marble statues standing about in the hall, a most deplorable concrete water-nymph bathing herself in a gold-fish pond in the middle of the lawn—it was the sort of place you might be able to run if you had a dozen servants, which he had.

But he seemed to camp out in it. He did not really give the impression of living in his house. He never even slept on a bed. He had plenty—interior-sprung mattresses and all that—but he slept on the tile floor on the verandah; not even a sheet under him. It was pretty hot, mind you.

I asked him about this one day, and he said: 'You know, John, if I lost all my money tomorrow I should go on living exactly as I do now. I shouldn't live in this house, of course, and I shouldn't have three motor cars. I should sleep on the pavement, I suppose—but what would be the difference between sleeping on the pavement and sleeping on this floor? I need six feet by two feet of ground to sleep on, that's all. I should eat two meals of

rice a day, but that's what I eat now. I should wash under the tap, but I wash under the tap now. All the luxury in the world boils down to this,' he said 'a comfortable place to sleep—and if you're used to it the floor's the most comfortable place there is—enough simple food to eat, and water to drink and wash yourself with.'.....

'If you go to India you will see a lot that is not simple—but notice how much of this is really traditionally Indian 'Consider the copper cooking pots, or the earthen-ware pots for carrying water. Have you ever seen an Indian girl, in her *Sari*, carrying two water-pots on her head? Consider the mats and carpets—that are used for sitting on, you remember. Look at the various styles of traditional Indian sandals—simple but with a beauty of shape which no Western designer of shoes has ever approached.

'Another great difference I found between India and the West is in the attitude to marriage. One night at my friend Choti's house we were sitting on the lawn by the water-nymph. The conversation turned to women.

"Our South Indian women," said Choti, "are the finest in the world. And our old-fashioned South Indian marriages are the happiest."

"But how do you know" I asked, "that your women don't just suffer in silence? They don't have much to say. How do you know they are happy?"

"Do you know, John," he said, "we South Indian men are crippled before our women! We're crippled before them."

'I asked what he meant.

"Well, they rule us—that's what," he said, "Look at my three daughters, when their husbands come home from work the daughters take their shoes off them, and clean them themselves, because they think it's their job. They have plenty of servants, but even so they won't let the servants do it. Whatever orders their husbands give them they obey without a word. They never argue or disagree with their husbands. And yet, do you know, they always get their own way."

'To the Western view, perhaps, Indian women are chattels. But I stayed in perhaps a score of Indian homes long enough to get to know the inns and outs of the thing....and only once did I meet an unhappy married woman, and she was a Christian. All the others were happy in a way which I believe very few European married women are.'

.....

'But the thing which strikes you most forcibly about all Indian women when you get to know them well enough that they are no longer a bit shy with you, is—well, a poise or self-possession which they seem to have: an air of complete self-confidence.

'My theory about this is that they know exactly where they are all the time. From the time they are born their relations with every one with whom they come in contact are fixed and unchanging. They never have to worry. It is all laid down.

'How dull, you may say; but remember that they are conditioned to all this from birth. They never expect anything else and nearly all of them give the appearance, at least, of being completely happy.....

'I have often wondered just how the fundamental Hindu belief—the belief in reincarnation, or the transmigration of souls—affects the actual thoughts and actions of the Hindus. I suppose our thoughts and actions are influenced to a great extent by the fact that at heart every one of us really believes he has only got one life—one life on this earth, that is—for very few Christians place their idea of the next world on the same plane of seriousness as their idea of this one. If they did they would not be so reluctant to die. And therefore we Westerners feel that we have got to achieve some-thing—move a few mountains, in fact—in this life.

'But the Indian is quite sure that we have all had millions of lives before, and have got millions to come. It is good thing, he knows, to have progress, but such things are not really fundamental. I do not mean to say that India is not progressing; she is progressing very

fast indeed—but the spirit which moves people is different there.'

In his work, '*Is India Civilised?*' Sir John Woodroffe explains in the following lines (P. 246) how harmony was achieved in ancient India both inside the home as well as outside :—

"As a matter of fact there is no religion which more justly and logically balances the claims of the life of the world and the life of Spirit than does Hinduism. Its principles are opposed to all false asceticism. This is seen in the *Purushartha*, the *Ashrama*, and the distinction of life upon the two paths of enjoyment (*Pravritti Marg*) and renunciation (*Nivritti Marg*). The *Trivarga* of the first are Morality (Dharma), moral desire (Kama), and the means (Artha), namely, wealth and so forth, by which lawful desires may be lawfully realized. Man in the world is encouraged to seek all these. In the first two *Ashramas* life was lived as the continent student (Brahmacharyya) and as the married house-holder (Grihastha). Save rare exceptions all were called upon to marry. The fourth *Purushartha* is Liberation (Moksha) to which man is exclusively bent in the subsequent forest life (*Vanaprastha*), and as the mendicant (*Bhikshu*), who, without ought of his own, and wending to his death, sought union with the Source of all. In the first two stages man was on the path of enjoyment ; that is lawful enjoyment: worshipping God ; in the last two when household duties were done and commencing old age wended to death, entry was made on the path of renunciation and union was sought not with Spirit as embodied in the universe, but as transcending it. This was the round of life for all, except for a few highly developed souls who might enter the path of renunciation at once without first going through the stage of householder. How supremely beautiful and balanced this ancient ideal was, none can know but those who have studied it and fathomed the profound principles on which it rested ; principles which harmonised the world and God in one whole. This glory has today largely passed like others. Nevertheless it remains a

wonderful vision which only a truly civilised people could have seen and practised.'

The ancient Indian polity was based on *Dharma*. The word *Dharma* has a much deeper and wider meaning than the word 'Duty'. It is a whole code of morality. '*Vaishishika Sutra*' defines '*Dharma*' as follows :—

यतो अम्युंदय निस्क्षेयस् सिद्धिः स धर्मः ।

'Dharma is that which brings joy, in the Life Here, and the Hereafter.'

Dharma is the basis of Indian civilization. The whole tradition of India is based on society as a collective unit, while spiritual life is the domain of the individual. Economic interdependence on the social plane and spiritual independence on the personal plane is what we call '*Dharma*.'

In ancient India social security for the individual was obtained through the joint family to which he or she belonged, and for the joint family through communal ownership of the village land, which was owned by the village community as a whole, and was to be shared for cultivation according to periodical allotments made by the village Council.

The State in Ancient India was based on a system of decentralisation, of which the village community, as a self-governing corporation was the centre and the basis. Village administration in Ancient India was made up of a hierarchy of units of increasing size and jurisdiction. The lowest unit was the union of ten villages administered by what is called *Samgrahma*; the next larger unit comprised 200 units administered by a *Kharvatika*. The next higher unit was made up of 400 villages under its administrative head called a *Dronamukha*. This hierarchy of village unions culminated in the organisation called *Mahagrama* made up of 800 villages called *Sthaniya* (the modern thana), which was the centre of culture, trade, business, and means of livelihood, where the villagers of the entire locality would meet and cultivate a corporate life.

There is nowadays a growing tendency of reaction against

modern industrialism and the allied political machine of the State in favour of a decentralised polity and revival of cottage industries. In his work *'Ends And Means'*, Aldous Huxley concludes : 'The political road to a better society is, I repeat, the road of centralisation and responsible self-government. But in present circumstances it is extremely improbable that any civilized nation will take that road. It is extremely improbable for a simple reason which I have stated before and which I make no excuse for repeating. No society which is preparing for war can afford to be anything but highly centralized.'

Speaking on *'Man and His Relation to Society'*, Dr. Karl Mannheim observed in a B. B. C. broadcast :—

"The control of the accumulation of too much power in the hands of the few in the economic sphere has to be paralleled in the field of social organisation. Here too, not bigness—gigantic organisations—are the promise of the day, but the deliberate establishment of communities the size of which is sufficiently limited as to make all institutions human, and relations between man, as far as as possible, personal.

"Of course, a world economy wants certain organisations on a large scale. There is need for an international settlement of big issues, international airways, international financial arrangements, regulation of minimum standards concerning work, and the freedom of personality (to mention some examples only) ; but these are compatible with a system in which culture remains national, the region becomes the new organised unit, and decentralisation is aimed at wherever this is possible.

".....The fact that in the future the layout of a whole country may be planned, and foresight with a wide range would be required, does not mean that the cities we shall plan are bound to be big. The opposite holds true. In our new orientation we shall limit the size of our towns so that a community spirit should be able to develop, so that neighbourhood units should become again a reality, so that the love of man should be redirected towards the

common affairs of our every day life and of our community living."

The ancient Communalistic Philosophy of India was, in a word, wedded to space. It aimed at dividing the entire human society on a territorial basis, by breaking it into small isolated communities like an Indian village, or Owen's commune, which can only be possible in a decentralised government. In modern terms we may say the ancient system was based on regional economics, which is also the aim of the Gandhian Sarvodaya movement. It has been truly observed by H. G. Wells in a book of fiction (Vide '*Mr. Britling Sees It Through*,' P. 52) :—

"The primitive patriarchal village is Utopia to India and China.....Or at any rate it is their social ideal. They want no Utopias. Utopias come with cities.....And the first cities, as distinguished from Courts and autocratic capitals, came with ships. India and China belong to an earlier age. Ships, trade, disorder, strange relationships, unofficial literature, criticism—and then the idea of some novel remaking of society...."

Sir John Woodroffe in his work, '*Is India civilized?*' writes (P. 151):—

'As M. Barthelamy Saint Hilaire said ("*L' Inde Anglaise*") "In no country in the whole world has communal autonomy been so developed." It was, as Professor Monier Williams said, Self-government in all its purity. This was the primitive communal organization of the village with its headman, Panchayat or Council and its local officers and servants. Well developed also were the relations and functions of the people (Prajadharma) toward the King with his Councillors, and of the King towards his people (Rajadharma). Some seem to think that because India had not the ballot-box and hustings and other paraphernalia of political Western life, it did not know what self-government is. There are also a class of political writers who repeat that India "likes to be ruled," meaning thereby autocratic government. Such also know nothing of the Hindu spirit or History. The Hindu Kings were not auto-

crats. Their will was as much subject to the general Dharma as were the people. Whilst the people recognised the King, his duties and functions, the King did the same as regards the people. The Hindu spirit politically displayed itself in a form which was worthy of its great achievements. India has produced men successful in industry and commerce though it is often forgotten or unknown that from the date of Greek and Roman civilisation until about the close of the eighteenth century India was renowned for its artizanship and industries. "The world of Ormuz and of Ind" was proverbial. Pliny, in fact, complains of the drain of gold from Rome to India which furnished the former Imperial capital with some of its splendours.

There can be no gainsaying the fact that the occupation of a spacious house to live in is of the first importance for the healthy and normal development of man—morally, mentally and physically, and for the same reasons conditions of work within one's home are far more conducive to happiness as well as to efficiency of work, the labours of the worker being sweetened at intervals by the presence of his family environment, hence cottage industries besides land-farming point to the ideal.

The Hindu joint family system was a kind of mutual insurance society for the members comprising it. Hence, it was but natural that the first sacrifice which an individual was required to make, according to our ancient Dharma, was by subordinating his personal interest to the general welfare of the joint family to which he belonged. The joint family system evolved by our ancient law-givers may well be said to be the very acme of perfection in the science of social organisation. It was a kind of perpetual home in which the old generation gave place to the new, and as such while it was a competing unit for the outside world, it was in itself a world in the miniature. Not only the division of income in it is based on the communistic principle—(अमोयोग्यत्वमोश्चित्य, फलं चातु प्रयोजनम्): "From every one according to his capacity, to every one according to his needs."—but in such a family life and occupations of the various members can be as varied as in the outside world, and yet it supplies a

living illustration of the phenomenon, that all its members share an equality of bodily comfort and live on the same biological plane of existence. The educative and cultural influence of such an institution must be of a very far-reaching kind toward the making of a true humanity.

Another grand ideal inculcated by the institution of joint family is that of 'living a life nearest to nature', which does not mean reducing life to first principles of living, but it signifies, on the contrary, the imbibing of certain love of nature and of natural living. Hindus, generally speaking, excel in pastoral arts and would appear more or less to possess an instinct of nature-worshipping. 'Plain living and high thinking' is no mere precept with a Hindu, but a practical rule of conduct actually observed inside a Hindu joint family. The joint family also plays a most important part in the national economy of consumption by emphasising the need for simple and natural living, in which respect the life within Oriental homes is lived almost uniformly from the King to the commonest peasant. The Eastern civilisation has sought to make life uniform not in a soul-killing poverty, as often misrepresented, but in the gayest exuberance and richness of life that results from a contact with nature. The basic ideal, more or less enforced in practice, is to produce all economic utilities of a rational, healthy and normal consumption from raw materials as far as possible within the joint family. For instance, the Hindu woman takes a veritable pride in the art of cooking, which is to be strictly done inside the homes, and the excellence of her art does not only lie in preparing the most flavoured dishes, but it also lies in her utilising the most scanty resources and working by means of the crudest appliances adapted to her kitchen since primeval days of the hoary Indian civilisation. She would burn raw wood in the oven; would not hesitate to fetch her own water from the well of the village tank; would clean the copper or iron utensils, which possess great durability if nothing else; and would perform all the processes beginning from the grinding of corn on the antic grinding stone. Similarly, she would not only do all the sewing, tailoring and knitting work of the family, but go further than that, by devoting her leisure time to spinning and weaving according to the needs of the family.

She is the veritable Goddess of Wealth (*Grahlakshmi*) for the family. As Thomas Fuller wrote, 'Let men say what they will: according to the experience I have learnt, I require in married women the economical virtue above all other virtues.' In the words of Bernard Shaw, 'The love of economy is the root of all virtue.' An ideal joint family furnishes the best ground for a training in the arts necessary for living near to nature, such as those of backwoodsmanship—e.g., erecting your own cottage and thatching it; making your own cots, mats and like furniture; tending your own dairy cows and other cattle; storing grains for the year; and so on.

Thus, on the whole, we find it a pre-eminent feature of the Hindu family to lay an emphasis on a sane and rational art of consumption. Now the eyes of European reformers beginning from Le Play, are also bent toward bringing about a reformation in the art of consumption, and new movements are being set afloat with a view to study the problems concerning the development of a real art of consumption adapted to modern conditions of life. The importance of the family life and traditions as being conducive to man's happiness, which is greatly increased through the cultivation of a sane and rational art of consumption, is now realised in this modern age, after we have reduced our family ties, family environments and duties to a minimum practicable with our very physical existence, in our hot pursuit to produce more and more to an endless end of things. In the words of Ruskin:

"It is therefore the manner and issue of consumption which are the real tests of production. Production does not consist in things laboriously made, but in things serviceably consumable; and the question for the nation is not how much labour it employs, but how much life it produces. For as consumption is the end and aim of production, so life is the end and aim of consumption."

Indeed, for a Hindu the common sod of earth which he uses for his soap; the earthen pottery which is used in the household for storing water, for if used for drinking water or eating or cooking anything in it, it is to be at once destroyed after a single use; the dry leaves out of which are provided the cups and dishes for sumptuous feasts arranged for large

gatherings; even his loose apparel of an unsewn cloth for the lower part of the body which allows free access to air—all these and such like simple and natural articles of utility are not only indispensable to him, but the very life-breath of his existence, as forming part of his religious code. No poet or bard can paint or sing all the beauties of such a naturalistic life as lived in the Eastern homes and of which beauty, which is as pure as it is unostentatious, no Westerner can ever form an estimate. For further light on the subject we may commend the writings of Sister Nivedita (Margaret Noble) dealing with the description of Hindu life as lived within Hindu homes. Writing under the heading 'Woman's Sphere under Communalism' Dr. Radhakamal Mukerji says in his classical work, '*Principles of Comparative Economics*' (Vol. II, P. 97, P. S. King & Son):—

"In India the pre-eminent functions of woman as the queen of the garden, and the mistress of the household, as directing work and the enjoyment of the fruits thereof, creates and recreates civilisation. As the wife and co-partner, she makes civilisation sweet, beautiful and enjoyable. As the mother of the race, she transmits the fairer fruits; she sacrifices herself for humanity in and through the child. Our religion, which is social appeal enforced and effective, says—She is symbolical of the divine Mother, another form of whom is society. Every other-regarding act is a step in the realisation of the mother in man, who directs the sacrifice of the individual for the family, of the class for society, and of society for future generations as yet unborn. Society is not an hypothesis or an abstraction. It has a life and a soul, it calls forth our reverence, regard, love and sacrifice. The mother cultivates and teaches love, reverence and sacrifice in the under-stages which ultimately become the bonds of an organic unity of civilisation. She protects the purity of men and she protects the purity of society. She is the guardian-angel, as the friend of the sick, the incapable and the unfortunate. She not only conserves and protects, but she also educates and inspires; social relationships and institutions are through her raised from human purposive associations to instruments of the divine will, and it is her imperative need and inalienable right to transmit to posterity the synthetic and culminating

gift of man, society and God. These are her eu-psychic functions. The family, with the woman (and her child) as its guardian, is the basis for eugenic and eupsychic reconstruction."

Let us hope that just as the Western science has given a shock to the age-long mental torpor of the East, that so long slumbered on the high altitudes of a self-satisfied self-complacency born of a rich and glorious inheritance, the rejuvenated East will in its turn point the true solution to the West, which lies not in coal and iron values, but in values that are human.

We may quote here what a sage produced by modern India, the late Swami Rama Tirtha of blessed memory had to say when once during his visit to U. S. A. he was lying stretched beneath the cedars and pines on the sandy bank of a stream with a cool stone serving for a pillow, and a visitor, "some upstart of civilisation" put to him "half in joke" the question: "Why do you import Asiatic laziness to America? Go out, do some good."

Rama: "O my dear Self! As to doing good, is not that profession already chokeful, over-crowded? Leave me alone, I and my Rama.

"Laziness, did you say? Oriental laziness? Why? What is laziness?

"Is it not laziness to keep floundering in the quagmire of conventionality and let oneself flow down the current of custom and fashion, and sink like a deadweight in the well of appearances, and be caught in the pond of possession and spend the time which should be God's in making gold and call it "doing good"?.....Is it not laziness to lose your Godhead? What for is this worry and hurry, this break-neck, hot haste and feverish rush? To accumulate together Almighty Dollar like others, and what then? To enjoy as others! No, there is no enjoyment in chasing after enjoyment. O dear dupes of opinion, why do you chase your enjoyment? Why don't you sit down beneath the natural-Garden on the bank of this beautiful stream, and enjoy the company of your real blood relations

—free air, silvery light, playful water and green earth
 —relations of which your blood really formed? Hide bound in caste are the civilised nations. They separate themselves from fellow beings and exile themselves from free open Nature and fresh fragrant natural life into close drawing rooms—dens and dungeons. They banish themselves from the wide world, excommunicate themselves from all creation, ostracise themselves from plants and animals. By arrogating to themselves the airs of superiority, prestige, respectability, honour, they cut themselves into isolated stagnation. Have mercy, my friends, have mercy on yourselves.

“The wealth sought out of the possession of more needy and added to your property by organised craft will enable you simply to have sickening dinners of hotels and taverns and furnish you with pallid countenances and conventional looks, will imprison you in boxes called rooms choked with the stink of artificiality, will keep you all the time in the restlessness of mind excited by all sorts of unnatural stimulants, physical and mental. Why all such fuss for mere self-delusion? In the name of such supposed pleasures lose not your hold on real joy, no need of beating about the bush. Come, enjoy the Now and Here. Come, lie with me on the grass.

“Don’t you waste away your life in soliciting the favour of silver or gold to *insure* your life. Can your *life be insured* by becoming rich in money and paying in time? Don’t you believe it. O deluded Immortal! Why seek excuses for existence in rush and push about dainty trifles?

“The so-called advanced nations of Europe and America are only in advanced stages of mortification. Advancement means spiritual or intellectual advancement. True Progress must touch the real man and not waste itself on his mere shadow. Progress has nothing to do with material richness or with the multiplying of unnecessary necessities. The ancient Aryans writing magnificent works, living unsophisticated free lives and owning nothing in the world, led a mode of life *to be repeated by history again with proper modifications*. Present civilisation

is side-tracked from its main end. Man is talked of just as they speak of corn and wheat; prices rising or falling. Rise above it. Nothing can set a price on you.

"Beloved devotees of show, to you the Aryan ideal of *Sanyas*, Renunciation, appears as idle dreaming. Be on your guard, please. *The time is ripe to shake you and wake you up and make you realise what a terrible nightmare you were under.* The civilised man without renunciation through love is only a more experienced and wise savage.

"Be not charmed by the glamour, artificiality, conventionality, money-madness of the civilised world. These have proved a failure. These were tried in the fire and found wanting like wood, hay or stubble. Half the population is dying of starvation, the other half is buried under conspicuous waste, superfluous furniture, scent bottles, affectations, galvanised manners, all sorts of precious trifles, squalid riches and unhealthy show.

"Neither mental nor manual labour is incompatible with health and longevity, *except when the one is maintained at the expense of the other.* But in the present day world some are living on (rather dying of) manual labour, others are perishing from the luxury of intellectual dissipation (mental strain). This is like dry bread being divided among some members of the family and mere butter (or garnishing) distributed among some others.....

"Equality, Equality is the law of happiness. Savage greed, animal instinct of clutching, grasping, and worse than animal tendency to possess and accumulate keeps them hurried, worried and flurried. Let the typhoid fever of arrogance and vain ambition be allayed. Let the inexorable Truth be instilled and drilled into every ear: "Just inasmuch as thou hast possessed anything thou hast been possessed and obsessed."

"Be not oppressed by the pressure of civilisation or the ways of the world around you, O aspirer after Truth. Be not handicapped by the show and display of the so-called advancing nations. Their "Facts and Figures" are mere trickery of the senses, fables and fictions; and their "hard

cash and stern reality" is mere gossamer and will-o'-the-wisp. *In twentieth century, the day is not far off, when the progressing nations must change their forms of government or ways of living and fashion them on the principles of freedom and Vedanta.* In renouncing the sense of possession, in adopting the spirit of Vedantic renunciation lies the salvation of nations as well as of individuals. There is no other way.

"In all the civilised Western countries, suffering from the fever of thirst to accumulate, indigenous forces are strongly at work which soon, very soon must wake up the self-stifled grubbers from the nightmare of possession. The Reign of Renunciation is to bless the world, the Kingdom of Freedom."

As observed by Bharat-Ratna Jawaharlal Nehru:

"Fine buildings, fine pictures and books and everything that is beautiful are certainly signs of civilisation. But an even better sign is a fine man who is unselfish and works with others for the good of all. To work together is better than to work singly, and to work together for the common good is the best of all."

The next step in the advance of civilisation is for the individual to learn to sacrifice his personal interest for the common good of the community. The ideal should be as follows:—

त्यजेत देहं कुलस्यार्थे, ग्रामस्यार्थे कुलं त्यजेत ।

ग्रामं त्यजेत जनस्यार्थे, आत्मार्थे पृथ्वीं त्यजेत ॥

"One should renounce one's body (comforts) for the sake of family; renounce (the interest of) one's family for the sake of the commune, village or town of one's habitat; renounce (the interest of) the commune for the sake of humanity; and renounce the world for the sake of the *Atman* (self-realization.)"

Let us always remember the agonising cry of all times contained in the 'Savitri Stotra' with which Sage Vyasdeva concludes the Mahabharata: (Swargrohanika Parva, Ch. 5. Sh. 59)

ऊर्ध्वं बाहु विरीम्येष
 न च कश्चित् श्रणोति मे ।
 धर्मात् अर्थञ्च कामञ्च
 तत्किं धर्मं न सेवते ॥

“With uplifted arms I am crying aloud but nobody hears me.
 From Dharma originate Profit and Pleasure. Why should not
 Dharma, therefore, be sought?”

II. RELIGION AND SOCIALISM AS BASIS OF CIVILISATION

All religions teach us what the higher way of life is. But the religious teachings fail to make an appeal to modern intellect for want of a rational explanation why a man should be good and virtuous and unselfish, and why there should be one law 'Might is Right' for the animal kingdom, and another 'Right is Might' for mankind? That is why our present-day Intellectual Age has so far failed to evolve a civilisation based on Moral order.

The answer to the question is to be found in the following observations made by Dr. Paul Duessen, formerly Professor of Philosophy in the University of Kiel (Germany) at the end of his Indian tour before a gathering at Bombay :—

"The gospels quite correctly establish as the highest law of morality, '*Love thy neighbour as thyself.*' But why should I do so, since by the order of nature I feel pain and pleasure only in myself, not in my neighbour? The answer is not in the Bible, but it is in the Vedanta, in the great formula '*That art thou,*' which gives in three words the combined sum of metaphysics and morals. You shall love your neighbour as yourself because you are your neighbour, and illusion (*avidya* or ignorance) makes you believe that your neighbour is someone different from yourself."

But this is precisely what Lord Jesus meant when he spoke to those who were not capable of understanding anything better :

"A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another ; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another."
(St. John, 13/34)

"And now I come to Thee (Father); and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves."
(*ibid*, 17/13)

"That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me."

(*ibid*, 17/21)

"And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are:"

(*ibid*, 17/22)

"I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me."

(*ibid*, 17/23)

So also says Lord Krishna in the '*Bhagavad-Gita*':—

*"The Yogi, who has devoted his self to abstraction, looking alike on everything, sees his self in every creature, and all creation within his self." (VI/29)

"He who sees Me in everything, and sees everything in Me, never loses sight of Me, nor I of him." (VI/30)

"He who worships Me abiding in all creatures, and thinking that all is one, abides in Me, no matter what his mode of life." (VI/31)

In his autobiography, "*My Search for Truth*," Henry Thomas Hamblin (1873-1958), Founder of "*Science of Thought Review*" writes:

"It is interesting and helpful to make a slight study of comparative religions, not in order to try to prove that any one religion is superior to all others, but rather to see how wonderfully all religions in their deepest implication agree, and how they all meet finally at the same one goal of Divine union."

- * सर्वं भूतस्थमात्मानं सर्वभूतानि चात्मनि ।
 ईक्षते योग युक्तात्मा सर्वत्र समदर्शनः ॥ (६/२९)
 यो मां पश्यति सर्वत्र सर्वं च मयि पश्यति ।
 तस्याहं न प्रणश्यामि स च मे न प्रणश्यति ॥ (६/३०)
 सर्वं भूतस्थितं यो मां भजत्येक त्वमास्थितः ।
 सर्वथा वर्तमानोऽपि स योगी मयि वर्तते ॥ (६/३२)

Swami Vivekananda says in his lecture on '*My Master*':

"I learnt from my Master (meaning Sri Ramakrishna) the wondrous truth that the religions of the world are not contradictory or antagonistic; they are but various phases of one eternal Religion; that one eternal Religion is applied to different planes of existence, is applied to the opinions of various minds and various races. There never was my religion or yours, my national religion or your national religion; there never existed many religions, there is only the one. One infinite Religion existed all through eternity, and will ever exist, and this Religion is expressing itself in various countries, in various ways. Therefore we must respect all religions, and we must try to accept them all as far as we can."

Religion has been defined as the 'manifestation of divinity already in man.' And this divinity is nothing but the *Atman* or Brahman, the Reality behind the universe. If God is the beginning and the end and everything of religion, and if the kingdom of God is already within you, how can religion be ever in peril in any point of time, whatever may be the advancement of Science? In trying to understand nature, Science has something in common with religion and philosophy. Therefore, there need be no conflict between Science and Religion. As observed by Einstein, there is a mutuality between Science and Religion. This is what Einstein says about Science vis-a-vis religion:

"Even though the realms of religion and science in themselves are clearly marked off from each other, nevertheless there exist between the two strong reciprocal relationships and dependencies.....But Science can only be created by those who are thoroughly imbued with the aspiration towards truth and understanding. The source of feeling, however, springs from the sphere of religion. To this, there also belongs the faith in the possibility that the regulations valid for the world of existence are rational, that is, comprehensible to reason. The situation may be expressed by an image: Science without religion is lame, religion without Science is blind."

(*Out of My Late Years*)

It would have been more accurate for Einstein to say, 'Science without religion is blind, religion without Science is lame.' Professor Tawney, in his book '*Religion and the Rise of Capitalism*' has given an apt quotation from Bishop Berkeley: "Whatever the world thinks, he who hath not much meditated upon God, the human mind, and the *summum bonum* may possibly make a thriving earth-worm, but will most indubitably make a sorry patriot and a sorry statesman."

However, when religion gets stuck in an unchangeable pattern of non-essentials—dogmas, customs, rituals, and institutions of various sorts—it is prone to be in danger, because the changeability of the non-essentials of religion is also a truth of religion. Certain religious societies are trying to formulate an ethical code of conduct laid down by various religions on the basis of the largest common factors, but all artificial attempts at unification of religions are bound to fail, since variation is necessary for evolution. The essence of Religion lies not in mere belief or a course of conduct, but in the approach to the ideal of Self-realisation, and in teaching us the way how to attain eternal bliss and immortality. Thus it may be said that all religions, though differing externally, are basically one in their essence. Inasmuch as the Vedanta philosophy alone supplies the key to the understanding of all religions it may be called the Universal Religion. That is why the great philosopher, Schopenhauer wrote: "It (Vedanta) is destined sooner or later to become the faith of the people."

Said Jesus Christ: 'I am the way, the Truth and the Life.'
(John : 14.6)

For the religious man there can be no difference between the way, the life and the truth. Truth alone is both life and way for him. His every action must be motivated by God-hunger, and lead him one step nearer to God. Every act must become worship. The greatest of all the hungers of man is for spirituality. As St. Augustine wrote :

"Thou hast made us for Thyself, and the heart of man is restless until it finds itself in Thee."

When asked for a last message before his departure from the world, the Lord Buddha is reported to have said, "I only show the path. It is for each one not mechanically to accept what I say, or follow the path laid down by me. Each one should, on the one hand, strive to find the path for himself and ascertain the truth by his own experience. He may reject my teaching if he is not satisfied and must accept it only if satisfied."

Writing on 'The Sufi mystics of Islam' in 'Voice Universal' Caroline Woodsworth of Belgium observes:

"The Sufi philosophy is that God is everything, the whole of Creation. He is everywhere in Nature, and all of Nature is in Him. In so far as our inner eyes are not opened, and we cannot see that this is so, we suffer from illusion....The religious life of the Sufi consists in seeking the inner path of return to God, the "mystical marriage" of Christianity, the Yoga (or divine union) of Eastern religions. When the heart is filled with love of God, and love of God in His Creation, there is then no room for sin or error—"when a place is filled with sunlight there can be no shadow, and so there is no point in laying down laws to banish darkness....."

"For the Sufi, all roads lead to God, for within His Creation is God Immanent, and as within each human being the Kingdom of God is to be found (a truth given by Jesus and respected by St. Paul) there can be no intolerance among religions, for each in its time and place leads man towards the the same inner Reality, and divine At-one-ment."

As Lord Krishna says in the 'Bhagavad-Gita' :

"Whoever worships any deity or follows any form of belief ultimately attains to Me, provided he is serious and one-pointed."

In his last Birth-day Message Acharya Vinoba Bhave writes in '*Bhoodan*,' Rajghat, Kashi :

"The sages of India have proclaimed their experience and conviction about the unity of all mankind, nay, of

all living beings—the whole animate and inanimate universe. This is our greatest treasure. "We are world citizens."

....."I think India is the land of spirituality and the West is the cradle of science. The coming age is the age of science and spirituality.

"If science were to function under the guidance of spirituality, we could, I hope, bring heaven upon the earth. I have a great belief in spirituality, and an equal belief in science.....

"I have a feeling within me that just as science has made it possible for ballistic weapons to be directed toward their targets thousands of miles away, similarly it should be possible as a result of spiritual discipline to influence the whole world from one place. Of course, it would require complete purity of the heart."

As observed by Rev. Bro. Mandus in his work, *'The Wondrous Way of Life'*:—

"Even as man has discovered the laws which release atomic energy, so must he learn to understand and use the laws of love and faith by which all the power, wisdom and knowledge that is God can become released in our souls, minds, bodies and all activities. And the greatest of all these laws is to love God above everything else, and your neighbour as yourself, for God is Love.

...."In these days of great scientific advances, of great human knowledge concerning the fabric of the universe, there is now a corresponding illumination concerning the truth of Spirit, and of the power of God so freely available to all who care to explore His Kingdom. In fact, the greatest field of exploration now open to man is the realm of Divine mind.

"To these modern explorers in the infinite realms of God, I would say, "Go forward! Leap out into the unknown territory with faith, and observe the laws of God which condition every man's entrance therein. Then you will bring back the almost lost truth that the almighty power of God is waiting to pour forth through

mankind, to transform and magnify every aspect of his experience."

That science and spirituality are two aspects of the same Truth are becoming clearer and clearer. But it must not be forgotten that with the mind it is impossible to judge the spiritual things. For a correct appraisal of the Truth or the one Reality mere intellectual process is of no avail, unless we develop intuition through faith and a correct metaphysic. As observed by Count Arnold Keyserling in his address delivered in 1961 at the Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture, Calcutta:—

"The attitudes to the established institutions of devotional religion are changing. Man is considering himself no longer as a member of a Church, following blindly its religious precepts. Now he has to know how, and in which way, he may live his life ; he is prepared to learn from anyone who knows a better way. Instead of trying to identify himself with a community based on a founder and led through the bond of devotional love, he is endeavouring to become capable of loving all humanity, to realise God beyond form and name, as pure Being, or as the pure force of love, the origin of his personal centre.

"The universe is based on creative energy, which, in human life, takes the form and experience of love. But man may be supported by this fundamental energy, or God, and may establish himself in this never-ending stream, only if he does not act from finite causes, such as scientific nationalism, political loyalty or private interest.... But in our Age, metaphysics is going to become for everybody the necessary basis for the achievement of destiny.....

.... "The new Age is built on the three pillars of work, *social justice, and critical understanding*. Hence, the new metaphysics will no longer be confined to the class-room of universities. Its tenets will become general knowledge, thanks to which man will be able to understand his place in the universe and to lead his life accordingly.

..... "The further efforts of whole generations will be needed till this system of knowledge embraces all the

fields of human endeavour and activity, until metaphysics becomes a part of everybody's life as the tenets of faith have been in past ages."

Thus the three pillars on which the foundations of the coming Renaissance have got to be laid are: (1) Disinterested work as taught by Karma Yoga. (2) Social Justice or *Dharma* and (3) Discrimination that comes from Gnani Yoga or a correct metaphysic.

Vedanta supplies the key to the understanding of all religions, which are basically one.

As observed by Ramakrishna Paramhansa:

"One Infinite Religion existed all through eternity and will ever exist, and this Religion is expressing itself in various countries in various ways."

According to a great practical Vedantist, Swami Ram Tirtha of blessed memory, "The word 'Vedanta' means the ultimate science, the science of the soul. It requires a man to approach it in the same spirit in which you approach a work on Chemistry. These are not mere subjects of speculation. European philosophers make the subjects simple matters of speculation, but it is not so with the Indian philosophers. With them any subject, which is proved theoretically is half proved only if it is not verified through experience, if it is not realized and experimented upon. A religion that is based on authority is no religion. That alone is truth which is based upon your own authority."

Vedanta is the supreme source of spiritual knowledge. It is the quintessence of all that is best and highest in our ancient thought and philosophy. It not merely enables us to acquire a theoretical knowledge of the Spirit, but also helps us to experience, realize and attain the ultimate Reality. It is both a science and an art, and whether we call it a science of the Soul or the Spirit, or a science of Religion, or a scientific Universal Religion, it must be distinguished from the ordinary idea of a religion based on dogmas. In the words of Swami Vivekananda:—

"The essence of the knowledge of the Vedas was called

by the name of Vedanta, which comprises the UpanishadsStrength, strength is what the Upanishads speak to me from every page.....Therein lies strength enough to invigorate the whole world: the whole world can be vivified, made strong, energised through them. They will call with trumpet voice upon the weak, the miserable, and the downtrodden of all races, all creeds, and all sects, to stand on their feet and be free. Freedom, physical freedom, mental freedom, and spiritual freedom are the watch-words of the Upanishads. Aye, this is the one scripture in the world, of all others, that does not talk of freedom. The Upanishads are the Bible of India.....

“The one central idea throughout all the Upanishads is that of realization. Beyond all sound, all sight, beyond form, absolute, beyond all taste and touch, infinite, without beginning and without end, even beyond nature, the Unchangeable—he who realizes Him, frees himself from the jaws of death. But it is very difficult. It is, as it were, walking on the edge of a razor, the way is long and perilous but struggle on, do not despair. Awake, arise, and stop not till the goal is reached.”

The Upanishads deal mainly with the attainment of real knowledge, that of the Spirit, leading to Bliss of Brahman—the infinite joy of Brahman, the Ultimate Reality. Everything else is woven round this great objective. The knowledge of the Reality is imparted therein from various points of view to suit the requirements of various grades of ‘Truth-seekers’, the highly developed souls as well as the initiates. Thus, we find, in their tone, style and manner they vary widely, being now simply narrative, now allegorical and expository, often assuming, in either case a dialogue form.

Prophets come and prophets go leaving behind them religions which divide the world further. But the *Rishis* (seers) who composed the Upanishads, and whose insight they embody, kept themselves in the background, it seems, because they had completely transcended their individual personality. The Vedanta is, indeed, the Breath of the Eternal.

The great German philosopher, Schopenhauer, says:—

“In the whole world there is no religion or philosophy so sublime and elevating as the Vedanta (Upanishads). It has been the solace of my life, and it will be the solace of my death. If the philosophy or religion is meant to be a preparation for after life, a happy life and a happy death, I know of no better preparation for it than the Vedanta (Upanishads)..... (They) are products of the highest wisdom.....It is destined sooner or later to become the faith of the people.”

Referring to the above opinion, Max Muller, by no means given to uncritical admiration of things Indian, says:—

“If these words of Schopenhauer required any endorsement, I should willingly give it as the result of my own experience during a long life devoted to the study of many philosophies and many religions.

“I am neither ashamed, nor afraid to say that I share his enthusiasm for the Vedanta and feel indebted to it for much that has been helpful to me in my passage through life.”

“The Upanishads are the...sources of...the Vedanta philosophy, a system in which human speculation seems to me to have reached its very acme.....

“I spend my happiest hours in reading Vedantic books. They are to me like the light of the morning, like the pure air of the mountains: so simple, so true, if once understood.”

Victor Cousin, the celebrated French historian of philosophy, says:—

“There can be no denying that the ancient Hindus possess the knowledge of true God. Their philosophy, their thought is so sublime, elevating, so accurate and true, that any comparison with the writings of the Europeans appears like a Promethean fire stolen from heaven as in the presence of the full glow of the noon-day sun.”

Sir William Jones, the great Orientalist, says:—

“It is impossible to read the Vedanta or the many fine

compositions in illustration of it, without believing that Pythagoras and Plato derived their sublime theories from the same fountain with the sages of India.

"When we compare the writings of the Greeks with the great, clear, comprehensive systems of the philosophy of the Hindus of India, we cannot help thinking that the Greeks derived their knowledge from the fountain-head of Indian philosophy."

J. H. Tuckwell in his philosophical work '*Religion and Reality*' says:—

"In one main conclusion we have long ago been anticipated by the religious philosophy of India.....In Professor Lodd of Harvard we have a noble Western thinker who by a process of careful reasoning has also arrived at the conclusion that the ultimate Reality must be conceived of as an Absolute Self of which we are finite forms of appearances. But it is the crowning glory of Vedanta that it so long ago announced, reiterated and emphasised the deep truth in a manner that does not permit us for a moment to forget it or explain it away. This great stroke of identity, this discernment of the ultimate unity of all things in Brahman or the one Absolute Self seems to us to constitute the masterpiece and highest achievement of India's wonderful metaphysical and religious genius to which the West has yet to pay the full tribute which is its due."

Freidrich Schlegel, in his work on '*Indian Language, Literature and Philosophy*' says:—

"It cannot be denied that the early Indians possessed a knowledge of the true God, all their writings are replete with sentiments and expressions noble, clear, and severely grand, as deeply conceived and reverentially expressed as in any human language in which man has spoken of their God.

"Even the loftiest philosophy of the Europeans, the idealism of reason, as it is set forth by the Greek philosophers appears in comparison with the abundant light and vigour of Oriental idealism like a feeble promethean

spark in the full blood of heavenly glory of the noon day sun, faltering and feeble and ever ready to be extinguished. The Divine Origin of man is continually inculcated to stimulate his efforts to return, to animate him in the struggle and incite him to consider a re-union and re-corporation with Divinity as the one primary object of every action and exertion."

Romain Rolland, in his work '*The Life of Rama Krishna*' says:—

"If there is one place on the face of the earth where all the dreams of living men have found a home from the very earliest days when man began to dream of existence, it is India. Her Unique privilege, as Barth (A. Barth: *The Religions of India*, 1879) has shown with great success, has been that of a great elder sister, whose spiritual development, an autonomous flower continuously flowing throughout the Methuselah-long life of the peoples, has never been interrupted.

.... "The age-long history of the spirit of India is the history of a countless throng marching ever to the conquest of Supreme Reality..... Again, has it been carefully noted that the "realizations" of the Hindu mind, which seem to us ultra-subjective, are nothing of the kind in India, when they are the logical result of scientific methods and of careful experiment, tested throughout the centuries and duly recorded? Each great religious missionary is able to show his disciples the way by which without a shadow of doubt they too may attain the same visions."

William James says:—

"The paragon of all monistic systems is the Vedanta philosophy of Hindustan.

"An Absolute One, and I that One,—surely we have a religion which emotionally considered, has a high pragmatic value ; it imparts a perfect sumptuousness of security. We all have some hour for this monistic music; it elevates and reassures."

Indeed, religion has no meaning if it is not lived upto and made practical in life. As was observed by J. S. Mill so long back, and which is still more true of today :

“All Christians believe that the blessed are the poor and humble and those who are ill-used by the world; and it is easier for a camel to pass though the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven; that they should judge not, lest they be judged; that they should swear not at all ; that they should love their neighbour as themselves ; and if one take their cloak, they should give him their coat also ; that they should take no thought for the morrow; that, if they would be perfect, they should sell all that they have and give it to the poor. They are not insincere when they say that they believe these things. They do believe them, as people believe what they have always heard and never discussed.....They have a habitual respect for the sound of them, but no feeling which spreads from the word to the things signified, and forces the mind to take them in, and make them conform to the formula. Whenever conduct is concerned, they look round for Mr. A and B to direct them how far to go in obeying Christ.

“Now we may be well assured that the case was not thus, but otherwise, with the early Christians. Had it been thus, Christianity never would have expanded from one obscure sect of the despised Hebrews into the religion of the Roman Empire. When their enemies said, “See how the Christians love one another” (a remark not likely to be made by anybody now), they assuredly had a much livelier feeling of the meaning of their creed than they have ever had since. And to this cause, probably, it is chiefly owing that Christianity now makes so little progress in extending its domain, and, after eighteen centuries, is still nearly confined to Europeans and the descendants of Europeans.”

That man cannot do without religion is a fact too apparent to need any discussion. And yet, though all religions have taught men to be good, how many good men do we find in

the world, and how little goodness has religion really imparted to man? Religion in the past has failed to allay the battle of life, in which the bestial instincts of man have been dominant and have been the deciding factor. It is even said that religion has shed more blood than all the wars. As observed by Sir Jean Herbert writing on *'Relationship between East and West'*.

"Our religious arrogance is more striking still. Indeed, the very dogma of Christian religion, admitting only a single divine revelation and refusing all value to any other claim, renders objective comparison impossible for a practising Christian. We are proud of the "holy images" which decorate our Churches, yet recoil horror-stricken before the strangely similar "idols" to be found in other temples. We are disturbed at reading the words of a great Moslem, Maulana Rumi: "A mandoline is made of dry wood, strings and dried skin, but our ears hear the voice of the beloved:....."

"We proclaim Jesus' Commandment, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself,' and are pitiless in condemning the attitude of the caste Hindus towards untouchables; but we forget that we should really compare our ideal with the Hindu ideal, which sees in human brotherhood not only a moral necessity but a metaphysical truth; and that we should compare Hindu practice, discrimination among various social groups, with our own actual problems of widespread poverty, racialism—still rampant in certain great democracies—social ostracism, class warfare, and so on.

"We invoke the same Commandment to condemn the Holy Wars of Islam, forgetting that on the ideal plane, the Koran declares that there shall be no compulsion in religious matters, and that on the historical plane, the Christian Crusades and the religious wars between Protestants and Catholics were no less evil than wars of Islam."

Compared with other countries India has been free from religious wars as such. That is because the sages and seers of

India admitted no restrictions to the speculative thought. They attained to a knowledge which was beyond all phenomena, and finally came to the conclusion that the truth was one. Hinduism looked upon religion as something personal—a personal relationship between God and man. As observed by Sri Ramakrishna Paramhans : “So long as the bee is outside the petals of the lotus and has not tasted its honey, it hovers round the flower, emitting its buzzing sound, but when it is inside the flower, it drinks its nectar noiselessly. So long as a man quarrels and disputes about doctrines and dogmas, he has not tasted the nectar of true faith, when he has tasted it he becomes still.”

As observed by a French author, Alain Danielou, in his work on Hindu Polytheism, *‘Le Polytheisme Hindou’* :—

“Whatever may be the importance which we attach to the great religions of to-day, we cannot put them on the same footing as Hinduism, which is not a religion and which is not opposed to any faith, any prophet, any incarnation, or any method of spiritual realization, since one of its basic principles is to make a place within itself for them and for all the forms of religious experience of the past and of the future.

“The eternal law of perfection teaches us that every people, in every age, is given the forms of revelation which it requires and that, within those forms or outside them, each individual must discover for himself, in accordance with his stage of development, a distinct road to realization, the forms of prayer which meet his needs, the morality, the rites and the gods which are his own.

“The task of spiritually awakened man, the person who possesses a fragment of the truth, is simply to pass on to qualified novices those things which he himself has experienced, and nothing else. He cannot claim that he possesses the only truth, for he cannot know what appears true in the eyes of others.”

Of Hindu tolerance, Col. Sleeman writes :—

“The Hindu believes that the Christians and Mussalmans may be as good men in all relations as he himself and in

as fair a way to Heaven as he is ; for he believes that my Bible and your Koran are as much revelations framed by the Deity for our guidance, as the Sastras are for his. He doubts not that our Christ was the Son of God, nor that Mahomed was the Prophet of God; and all that he asks from us is to allow him freely to believe in his own gods, and to worship in his own way. Nor does one caste or sect of Hindoos ever believe itself alone in the right way, or detest any other sect for not following in the same path, as they have as much toleration for each other as they have for us."

Similarly, an American missionary* writes :—

"It is a curious fact that the hideous and bloody monster of religious intolerance was hardly known in India until, first the followers of Mohammed and, secondly, the disciples of the meek and lowly Jesus began to invade the land."

The reason for this proverbial Hindu tolerance lies in Vedantic philosophy. As observed by Bernard Shaw :—

"In fact, Hinduism is so elastic and so subtle that the profoundest Methodist and crudest idolator are equally at home in it."

Or, as Sir Monier Williams writes :—

"If I may be allowed the anachronism, the Hindus were Spinozaites more than 2,000 years before the existence of Spinoza; and Darwinians many centuries before Darwin; and Evolutionists many centuries before the doctrine of Evolution had been accepted by the scientists of our time, and before any word like Evolution existed in any language of the world."

Here we may also quote the following appraisal of the great Emperor Asoka (B.C. 264-227), whose empire extended upto the other side of Hindukush Mountains, by the gifted

*Vide P. 166, '*India's Problem*' by John P. Jones : New York, Fleming H. Revell Co.

pen of H.G. Wells : (P. 212, *'Outlines of World History*, 1920 Ed.)

"Amidst tens of thousands of names of monarchs that crowd the columns of history, their majesties and graciousness and serenities and royal highnesses and the like, the name of Asoka shines, and shines alone, a star. From the Volga to Japan, his name is still honoured. China, Ti et, even India, though it has left his doctrine, preserve the tradition of his greatness. More living men cherish his memory to-day than have ever heard the names of Constantine and Charlemagne."

The empire of Asoka was not built on conquest by the sword but on the change of heart, the conquest of the brute in man. "All men are my children" wrote the exemplary Buddhist Emperor, Asoka, in his Dhauli inscription. Was there ever a king like him on earth, who publicly confessed his own misdeeds in letters carved on stone, and proclaimed the glory of the religion of love and non-violence ? No wonder, the warlike fury of the Mongolian hordes, who for centuries shook Europe and its civilisation, was subdued by the teachings of Lord Buddha, and they turned into peaceful shepherds and cultivators of the soil. As observed by Dr. Paul Dahlke, writting on *'World Peace'* :—

"There is cultural achievement in the human field similar to that performed by a man who should reclaim a waste piece of sandy soil by planting it and bringing it under cultivation, or erect an embankment against the ravages of the sea.....It is true that in Buddhist Asia also, the peoples have waged war. But a religious war is something which Buddhism has never yet experienced and never can experience so long as it remains Buddhism.....In the *Dhammapada*, the oldest collection of sayings in Buddhism, we read:

"Truly it never is by hate
That hate can ever come to end.
By love it is, hate comes to end:
This is the old, eternal law."

Paying a tribute to the Buddha in an address delivered on 18th May 1935 at a function organised by the Mahabodhi Society in Calcutta to observe the birthday of Lord Buddha, Poet Rabindranath Tagore is reported to have said,

"I had once gone on a visit to Buddha-Gaya, and it had thrilled me to think that he who had hallowed the earth by the touch of his feet had also come to that very place in the flesh. I saw a poor fisherman there who had come across the seas from far Japan to expiate for some misdeeds. Evening passed slowly into the solitude and silence of midnight, and still he sat with folded hands repeating with intense concentration, *Buddham saranam gacchami* (बुद्ध शरणं गच्छामि): "In the Buddha do I seek my refuge."

"In Borobudur in Java I saw the stories of Buddha's nativity, carved in hundreds of images round the *stupa*, each a perfect specimen of the sculptor's art, chiselled with loving care and infinite pains. This is at once an example of the cultivation of art and the practice of austerity—the *tapasya* that eschews all desire for the fruits of work and for name and renown, and aims only at the dedication of all that is best in oneself to glorify him who is worthy of being adored and remembered for all time.....

"Man has become man's worst enemy, because he is divorced from truth and his manhood is obscured. That is why we see in men all over the world mutual suspicion, fear and animosity.....In these days of the world-wide indignity of man it is meet that we should say "*Buddham Saranam gacchami*." He will be our refuge who manifested the *ideal of Man* in himself."

Buddhism laid stress on tolerance, compassion, and non-violence. It may be said to the credit of Buddhism that it is the only religion which has shed no blood and which has been acknowledgedly the apex of world culture and human benevolence. But Buddhism, as taught by the Master—that comes from a living touch—has waned, and the Buddhist teachings have become too abstruse for the laity. As

observed by Sir Edwin Arnold:

"The extravagances which disfigure the record and practice of Buddhism are to be referred to that inevitable degradation which priesthoods always inflict upon great ideas committed to their charge. The power and sublimity of Gautama's original doctrines should be estimated by their influence, not by their interpreters; nor by that innocent but lazy and ceremonious Church which has arisen on the foundations of the Buddhistic Brotherhood or "Sangha."

The Master had taught the duty of selfless love, and rewarded it with the bliss that he called Nirvana, i. e., the beatitude resulting from the purging of all desires. That was the path of self-realisation through Karma Yoga as we say in the language of Vedanta.

There is, in fact, no fundamental difference between the teachings of Vedanta and those of Buddha. As observed by Madam H. P. Blavatsky in *'The Secret Doctrine'* (Vol. I, - 6 97:

"If a Vedantic Brahman, of the Advaita Sect, were asked whether he believed in the existence of God, he would probably answer, as Jacolliot was answered—"I am myself 'God'; while a Buddhist (a Sinhalese especially) would simply laugh, and say in reply, "There is no God; no creation." Yet the root Philosophy of both Advaita and Buddhist scholars is *identical*, and both have the same respect for animal life, for both believe that every creature on Earth, however small and humble, "is an immortal portion of the immortal Matter"—Matter having with them quite another significance from that which it has with either Christian or Materialist—and that every creature is subject to Karma."

Sister Nivedita records in her *"Notes of some wanderings with the Swami Vivekananda"* (P. 29) that once at Almora Swami Vivekananda was speaking of Lord Buddha when a lady asked: "Why Swami, I did not know that you were a Buddhist!" "Madam," he said rounding on her, his whole face aglow with the inspiration of that name, "I am the ser-

vant of the servants of the servants of Buddha. Who was there ever like him?—the Lord—who never performed one action for Himself—with a heart that embraced the whole world! So full of pity that He—prince and monk—would give His life to serve a little goat! So loving that He sacrificed Himself to the hunger of a tigress!—to the hospitality of a pariah and blessed him! And he came into my room when I was a boy and I fell at His feet! For I knew it was the Lord Himself!”

For full 45 years Lord Buddha taught his doctrine of Deliverance. In all humility he moved from place to place, journeying bare-footed. His teachings had a marvellous effect. The entire society underwent a radical change. Megasthenes, the Greek Ambassador (Circa 306-298 B. C.) at the Court of Chandragupta Maurya observes with admiration:

“There is absence of slavery. The chastity of Indian women is unparalleled and the valour is the characteristic of men. No Indian was ever known to tell a lie, and theft being unknown, they required no locks to their doors. The Buddhist rule of life was generally observed throughout the country; no one kills any living animal or drinks wine. They do not keep pigs or fowls. There are no butchers’ shops or distilleries in their towns.”*

Again, we may quote from Mc Crindle’s *“Ancient India as described from Megasthenes and Mirrian”* (P. 40, Ed. 1877):

“Megasthenes has left a life-like picture of the Indian people. The Greek ambassador observed with admiration the absence of slavery in India, the chastity of the women, and the courage of men. In valour they excelled all other Asiatics; they required no locks to their doors; above all, no Indian was ever known to tell a lie. Sober and industrious, good farmers, and skilled artisans, they scarcely ever had recourse to a law-suit, and lived peaceably under their native chiefs. The kingly government is portrayed almost as described in Manu.”

* Dr. Vincent Smith’s *“Early History of India,”* P. 297.

Similar accounts we find recorded by the Chinese travelers, Hiuen Tsang and Fahien. Like the Greeks they were charmed. They say that the Hindus did not tell lies, that women lived on terms of equality with men. And they say, grand, wonderful universities in the mountains and forests existed all over the country. They go on describing in glowing terms the material wealth of the land, and what are called faithlessness and impurity, they say, were absolutely unknown. Crime was negligible in this country, and judged by any standard, India was an earthly paradise. This state of progress was not achieved by India through conflict or competition, but by establishing the rule of Dharma or righteousness, based on the knowledge of the Truth which Vedanta proclaims. Religion is another name for the path of *this* righteousness.

For instance, we have a recorded account given by the Chinese pilgrim, Hiouen-Tsang, how King Siladitya or Harsha-Vardhana of Kanyakubja every five years distributed in alms in the holy city of Prayag all the riches of the Royal treasury not only to the monks but also to all the poor classes of the population. Hiouen-Tsang had attended one such occasion, and has given a graphic account of how King Siladitya's generosity was as great as his piety. To quote his own words:—

"The seventy-five days assigned to the distribution had not come to an end. All the wealth stored up during five years in the royal treasury was exhausted. The king had nothing left him but the elephants, horses, and weapons of war indispensable for the protection of his kingdom and the punishment of those who might cause disturbance. Personally, he had given away in alms all he wore, the best part of his garments, his necklance, earrings, bracelets, the wreath round his diadem, the pearls that adorned his neck, and the carbuncle that glittered in the middle of his tuft of hair, in fact he had divested himself of everything he possessed. After having exhausted all his riches, he begged his sister to give him a common worn-out garment, and having clothed himself with it, he worshipped the Buddhas of the ten regions, and in a transport of

ecstasy he joined his hands, exclaiming, "In collecting all these riches and costly things, - I constantly feared that I should not be able to conceal them in a safe and impene-trable place. Now that I have been able to deposit them in the *Field of Happiness*, I consider them safe for ever. I wish in all my future existences thus to collect wealth in order to give alms to men, and obtain the ten divine faculties in all their plenitude." Sometime after this, the eighteen tributary kings collected large sums of money from the people of their States and bought back the mag-nificent necklace, the carbuncle of his head-dress, the regal vestments, etc., that the King Siladitya had given in alms and brought them back to him as an offering. But in a few days the King's raiment and the jewels of greater value were again bestowed in alms, like the first one."

The Portuguese when they came to India about four hundred years ago found the same honesty. The Portuguese writers noted with admiration the extraordinary regard for the plighted word shown even by the meanest Hindu soldiers was such that 'when prisoners of war are released on Parole for six months,' they 'would voluntarily return if they could not find ransom. Dishonour was always regarded as worse than death. Absence of a scrupulous regard for truth and taking advantage of an enemy were considered dishonourable.' 'The tremendous civilising influence of Hindu religion was such that not only the higher castes but the lowest castes maintained the fine traditions of warfare inculcated in the Shastras.' 'Night fighting and ambushes were unknown. There could be no fighting without due notice. Massive trumpets were blown four times to warn the enemy of their impending attack. True heroes as the Hindus were, they bore not the least grudge against the enemy, so that during a lull they would bathe in the same river and exchange betel and betelnuts.'

Col. Sleeman after his three years anti-thug work saw: "There have been numerous occasions when the life, the liberty and the honour and everything a Hindu holds dear depended on his telling a lie, but a Hindu will never tell a lie."

In a Sanskrit work entitled '*Bhoj Prabandh*' we find a story of King Bhoj (circa 57 B. C.) of Ujjain and a burglar. It is recorded that in the time of King Bhoj locks were not put on the doors of the State treasury. One night when the King was sleeping on the roof of the treasure-house, a Brahmin who was in dire need of money, entered the treasury with a view to commit burglary. He collected the choicest jewellery, and thinking that by possessing those jewels he would be very happy, he made a bundle of it in a piece of his cloth. Suddenly the idea came to his mind that when the owner of that whole treasury, King Bhoj, says very often that he is not happy, how could he be happy by possessing only a small fraction of it? He then realized that happiness did not lie in riches. Ultimately he became so much imbued with the spirit of renunciation that he left the bundle of jewellery and came out of the treasury. Exactly at that time King Bhoj who was lying awake was composing a poem of which he had completed the first three lines and he began to recite them aloud. The Brahmin thief who was at the time at the door of the treasury overheard the three lines, and at once completed the fourth line, and recited it loudly. The King was surprised to find somebody there and asked who he was. Thereupon the Brahmin confessed to the King the entire story of his attempted burglary. The King asked him to take as much jewellery as he liked, but the Brahmin thief refused, and said he was quite happy without any of it and left. The lines of the poem were as follows:—

चेतोहरा युवतयः सुहृदोनकुला ।
 सद बान्धवाः प्रणयगल्भगिरेश्च भृत्याः ॥
 -बलेन्दि दन्तिनिहवाश्चपला तुरंगाः ।
 सम्मिलते नयनयोः नहि किञ्चिदस्ति ॥

"I have heart-bewitching damsels, dependable friends and good relations; my servants are sweet-tongued and clever; 1 own big-tusked elephants and active steeds; all these are nothing when one's eyes are closed."

As was observed by Sri B. K. Mukerjee, Judge, Supreme Court of India, in his Convocation Address at the Gurukula Vishwa Vidyalaya, Hardwar:—

"As I stand here, addressing you today, my thought

turns on the unique character of our Indo-Aryan culture and its amazing vitality and continuity amidst the shifting scenes of Indian history. In spite of all aberrations and degeneracies which time brought in its wake, the Indian culture retains its essential features even today, though millennium after millennium have rolled away since its inception and the old historic civilisations of the world have vanished away almost completely. India still lives not merely as a geographical entity, it is the spirit of India that lives in spite of all the changes that have been brought about by time and the vital links of thought and ideals still connect us with the pre-historic past.

“To find unity amidst diversity is the key-note of our Vedic culture. What the Vedic Rishis wanted was to harmonise life in all its aspects and to arrive at a uniform truth amidst the conflicting diversities of this world. This synthetic ideal would, I daresay, afford a solution to all the complicated problems of modern times, provided it is adapted properly to the changed needs of the present society.”

As observed by Prof. Dr. Helmut G. Callis, of Utah, U.S.A. in his address on ‘*Religious Integration of men*’ at the Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture, Gol Park, Calcutta :—

“Arnold Toynbee has expressed his conviction that the world’s great religions now in existence are mere variations on a single theme. Toynbee quotes Symmachus as saying that the heart of so great a mystery can never be reached by following one road alone. Each of us has only a few rays of the divine light, but it takes the depth and breadth of all the human traditions to encompass the entire spectrum of spiritual insight possible to human beings.....

“The revival of the Hindu religion, which sees in every sincere faith a path to divinity, may hold out the hope that in some distant future the religious integration of men will become a reality.

“Today’s world is groping not for the narrow stunted religions of the dogmatic type ; it has no use for a

fanaticism that is afraid of the divine light which may have fallen on others ; it rather needs the vitality of a creative religion, chastened and open-minded, which has the vigour and the courage of deepening and reforming itself in the process of human history and daily living, a religion which is ready and eager to make its peace also with modern science.....

"Of scientific matters it has been said that 'the only dogma regarding them is that there is no dogma.' Only by allying itself with science can religion overcome the doctrinaire limitations and superstitions which now divide humanity. On the other hand, only by allying itself with religion can science become a human benefactor instead of a begetter of murderous power, enslaving dictatorships, and fiercely competing militarisms. The scientific attitude requires neither moral indifference nor religious apathy ; it rather demands loyalty to and insistence on truth alone, thus confirming the teachings of all prophets and sages. Disinterested science stands on essentially moral grounds, lifting men above the prejudices of clan, class, and nation. For both halves of the world, religion can set a moral purpose, with science finding effective means for attaining it.....

"The epoch which Kipling so aptly described and about which he so falsely prophesied is over. East and West have met : they are meeting daily.

"The world has become one stage, and all its peoples act in the same drama. Prosperity and depression, war and peace, survival and doom, can no longer be kept in separate departments. The great nations of East and West are now partners in scientific and industrial advance. The issues of democracy and communion, of freedom and equality, are world problems. For the first time in history, East and West are in a single world movement and struggle, as equals, for the sake of all mankind. A world-wide revaluation is upon us, taking place not only on the political surface, but penetrating to the very depth of culture and religion."

Infinite are the paths to reach the Infinite. Says the Bhagavad-Gita (IV/11):—

"To but one goal are marching everywhere,
All human beings, though they may seem to walk,
On paths divergent, and that Goal is I,
The Universal Self, Self-consciousness."

"As streaming rivers pass into the sea,
Abandoning all separate name and form,
So, he who sees the One casts off all name,
And form, and merges in the State Beyond."

"Cows are many different colours, but
The milk of all is of one colour, white;
So the proclaimers who proclaim the Truth
Use many varying forms to put it in,
But yet the Truth enclosed in all is One."

(Upanishads)

"As many souls, so many ways to God."

(Hadis, Sayings of Muhammad)

"Veda and Sankhya, Yoga, Shaiva-view,
And Vaishnava, and many others such,
Men follow as they variously incline;
Some thinking this is best; some others, that;
Yet Thou art the One Goal of all those ways,
Some straight and easy, others crooked, rough,
As of the countless streams, the one Vast Sea."

(Shiva Mahima Stuthi)

"In varying ways the Sages have described
The same unvarying and essential truths;
There is no real conflict 'twixt them all;
The knowers know the Way to reconcile.
Many the words and ways in which the wise
Have tried to teach One Truth to all mankind
Each way, each word, is right in its own place.
There is no conflict 'twixt them all
The sages see and say the same in each."

(Srimad Bahagvata)

Says Prophet Mohammad in the *Quran*:

"This that I am now uttering
The Holy Quran—it is unto you found
Within the ancient Seers' writings too;
For teachers have been sent to every race
Of human beings no community
Is left without a warner and a guide.
And aught of difference we do not make—
For disagreement there is none betwixt them

Between these Prophets. All that have been sent,
Have been so sent but One Truth to proclaim."

"Let all of us ascend towards, and meet
Together on the Common ground of those
High Truths and principles which we all hold."

The Arabic-Persian word for 'man' is '*insan*' which means 'friend of all', 'lover of his kind', 'The gentleman.' So also the Sanskrit word '*Arya*' means 'One to whom others go for relief'.

It should be remembered that spirituality has been the greatest treasure and distinctive contribution of India to world culture, and it is this that has kept our civilisation surviving through ages. As observed by the missionary author, Professor Lowes-Dickinson:—

"India stands for something which distinguishes it from all other peoples, and so she calls herself a Karma Bhumi (Land of Duty) as opposed to the Bhog Bhumi (Land of Enjoyment) of all other people. For this she has been wonderfully preserved until today. Even now we can see the life of thousands of years ago. Standing on the Ghats of Benares or by any village well we are transported into the beautiful antique world."

India has been called the cradle of civilisation. It is the distinctive privilege of India alone to have produced a galaxy of illumined spiritual luminaries, whose number is legion. Her ancient culture has been a perennial source of inspiration to all mankind, and some of the greatest minds of all ages and climes have paid the highest tributes to it. For instance, Dr. Cousins, the Irish poet says:—

"The culture of India was as ancient as civilisation itself. It was an influence leading to perfection and true liberation in the spiritual sense. India, specially young India, should realise the richness and responsibilities of its ancient heritage and endeavour to reinstate her once again as the mother of world's civilisation."

M. Louis Jacolliot, Chief Justice of Pondicherry, writes in his book '*La Bible Dans l'Inde*':—

"Soil of Ancient India, cradle of humanity hail! Hail,

venerable and ancient nurse, whom centuries of brutal invasion have not buried under the dust of oblivion! Hail, father of Faith, of Love, of poetry, of Science! May we hail a revival of the past in our Western Future.' 'India is world's cradle; thence it is that the common mother in sending forth her children even to the utmost West, has in unfading testimony of our origin, given her language, laws, morale. Manu inspired Egyptian, Hebrew, Greek and Roman legislation, and his spirit permeates the whole economy of our European laws.'

The celebrated French historian of Philosophy, Victor Cousin says:—

"When we read with attention the poetical and philosophical monuments of the East, above all those of India, which are beginning to spread in Europe, we discover there many a truth and truths so profound, and which make such contrast with the meanness of the results at which European genius has sometimes stopped, that we are constrained to bend the knee before the philosophy of the East and to see in this cradle of the human race the native land of the highest philosophy."

Sir Jean Herbert says:—

"We think of the democratic formula as a recent history, as the last word in progress if not the ultimate truth itself, forgetting that societies at best as democratic as ours existed for centuries in pre-Buddhist India."

Prof. Fleure of Manchester University says:—

"The modern world needs India's help. Her sages have shown ways in which men can solve controversies by transcending them. May India learn from our mistake and avoid some of the worst dangers that face us in the West."

Bergson says:—

"We are living in a frenzy, a frenzy which must give place to calmness and composure. Given to detachment and renunciation India can furnish a powerful solvent for the narrowness and bigotry of the West."

Romain Rolland says:—

"India's calm and ample metaphysics, her conception of the universe, her social organisation, the solution she has given to the problem of women, the family, love and marriage, and the magnificent revelation of her Art are indeed grand."

Dr. Matheson says:—

"It is not too much to say that the mind of the West with all its undoubted impulses toward the progress of humanity has never exhibited such an intense amount of intellectual force as is to be found in the religious speculations of India.....These have been the cradle of all Western speculations.....There is no intellectual problem in the West which had not its discussion in the East, and there is no modern solution of that problem which will not be found anticipated in the East."

Col. Donald Rockwell, Director General of Asiatic Research Expedition says:—

"I am deeply impressed by the beautiful serenity of Indian home life and its enviable family life."

Sister Nivedita (Margaret Noble) says:—

"The so-called tyrannised and tortured Hindu woman is as near perfection as any human being can be. Once a wife always a wife, even though the bond may be shared with or remains always only in name. That other men should be only as shadows to her, that her feet should be ready at all times to go forth on any path, even that of death, as the companion of her husband—these things constitute the purity of wife in India. Purity in every one of its forms is the central pursuit of Indian life."

Sir George Bridwood writes about Hindu women as 'perfect daughters, perfect wives, perfect mothers.'

Miss. A. M. Hardcastle, M. A., says:—

"There is a bitter contrast between the wives and mothers of India, who have so many cares and ties, and those of West whose hearts and arms are left empty of human cares, while

their heads are filled with encyclopoedias of modern knowledge.....Women are the foundation stone of the Hindu social system, and therefore they can expect and take no wide social liberties. A woman is not a man, physically, mentally and spiritually. Western educational and economic systems have denied this elementary fact to the increasing discomfort of all concerned."

Fredric Pincot says:—

"Everything tending to peace and well-being of society has been long since reduced by the Hindus to well-ordered rules. We have very little to teach them in matters of social philosophy. Any introduction among them of our crude ideas can only result in mischief and tend to bring the Hindus to the same chaotic scramble of antagonistic interests, which is the characteristic of our disgraceful muddle. All parties are united in the opinion that Hindu married life is an exceptionally happy state, and that is the clearest proof of the excellence of the Hindu marriage system and the severest condemnation of those who are seeking to unsettle it."

Prof. P. George, Minnesota (U.S.A.) writes:—

"India brings sustained traditions from immemorial past and will never be more than superficially westernised.... Particularly fitted to express a note of simplicity of living in spite of profundity of mind, her millions will remain like her saints and sages fundamentally simple, unaffected and unencumbered."

Mr. Harvell says:—

"Indian peasants though illiterate in the Western sense are the most cultured people of the world."

Miss Dynowsaka of Polland, while making a tour of India, at the request of some Polish cultural societies, said:—

"We have never seen a single angry face, never an expression of hatred, a phenomenon impossible in the West. This innate kindness of Indian character and the beauty and simplicity of the Indian nature gives them the feeling of real

brotherhood. They seem to be the expression of an unconscious yet deeply rooted realization of the unity of all life."

Bennet says:—

"Hindu's whole system postulates exceptional integrity."

Here we may quote, for instance, the following press report under the caption, *'This Is India'*:

"Monghyr. Aug. 1, 1962—A suitcase containing currency notes of the value of a lakh of rupees and some documents which a German engineer of the Indian Oil Refineries had dropped while speeding along a bumpy road in a jeep, was handed over to its owner early this week by the inhabitants of Gangour village in Monghyr district, according to a report received at Monghyr on Wednesday.

"A villager who found the suitcase had deposited it in the Gram Panchayat office. The grateful engineer offered a hundred-rupee note to the villager who, however, politely declined the reward but wanted the engineer to 'remember India when you return to your country.'

"The engineer was proceeding from Beghusarai to Khagaria when he dropped the suitcase. (P. T. I.)"

Sir John Woodroffe says:—

"In any sense the chief religious and philosophical concepts of India are in their essentials imperishable.....I will only say this, with conviction," concludes Sir John Woodroffe, 'that if the Indian people steep themselves in their culture, and if those who have lost regain their Indian soul, will give an Indian answer to every Indian problem which the Indian soil suggests to itself, the soul which replies will be spiritual and endowed with that will to maintain itself, from which all success follows."

.....'If, however, we compare the Indian contribution to exact positive and material culture with parallel contemporary developments amongst the Greeks, Greco-Roman, Saracen, Chinese and mediaeval Europeans the Hindus can make at least an equal and in some respects, a superior claim to that made by these peoples in respect of scientific culture. In fact, the trend of recent scholarship is toward

establishing the Hindu source of Greek sciences. Much of the credit also given to the Saracen is really due to the Hindus from whom they derived their Mathematics, Chemistry and Medicine. The Hindus, however, may have been indebted to the Greeks in some cases as is admitted in respect of Astronomy by Varahamihira. Professor Sircar observes that the pure Mathematics of the Hindus was on the whole not only in advance of some of the Greeks, but anticipated European discoveries of the 16th, 17th, 18th centuries. As Hankel in his history of Mathematics says, "It is remarkable to what extent Indian Mathematics enters into the science of our time." Dr. Morgan says, "Indian Arithmetic is that which we now use." The Hindus originated the numerals, wrongly known as Arabic because the Europeans got them from their Saracen teachers, and the decimal system of notation was known to Aryabhatta as early as the Fifth century. Algebra is a Hindu science despite its Arabic name; for as Cajori says the Indians were "the real inventors of Algebra." Colebrooke has analysed the points in which Hindu Algebra was favourably distinguished from that of the Greeks who, as Cajori thinks, got through Diophants their Algebraic knowledge from India. Geometry was studied by the Hindus from the date of Sulva-Sutras."

In his lecture on '*The Veda And Zind-Avesta*,' Max Muller says:

"There never was a nation believing so firmly in another world, and so little concerned about this. Their condition on earth is to them a problem; their real and eternal life a simple fact. Though this is said chiefly with reference to them before they were brought in contact with foreign conquerors, traces of this character are still visible in the Hindus, as described by the companions of Alexander, nay, even in the Hindus of the present day. The only sphere in which the Indian mind finds itself at liberty to act, to create, and to worship, is the sphere of religion and philosophy; and nowhere have religions and metaphysical ideas struck root so deep in the mind of a nation as in India. The shape which these ideas took amongst the different classes of society, and at different periods of

civilisation, naturally varies from coarse superstition to sublime spiritualism. But, taken as a whole, history supplies no second instance where the inward life of the soul has so completely absorbed all the other faculties of a people."

Count Bjornstjerna says ;

"The literature of India makes us acquainted with a great nation of past ages which grasped every branch of knowledge and which will always occupy a distinguished place in the history of civilization of mankind."

Cheiro (Louis Hammond), lately world's greatest seer who had learnt the science of palmistry in a Gurukula on the Western Ghats in India, and had predicted the exact hour of his death, said a little before his death, "I know enough to realise that in the East lie the secrets of the future; the secret of the mystery of life—why we are here and where we are going."

Lord Ronaldshay (later Count of Zetland) wrote in his book, entitled 'The Heart of Aryavarta—A study of the Psychology of Indian Unrest' (*Constable*) :—

"In India religion is still the vital force which, except for individual, it has ceased to be in Europe, and a vital force that it is in the power of every man to develop—even to the moving of mountains—by self-renunciation. That is the soul-force which Gandhi preached ; and the belief in it goes back to the Vedas from which he drew his inspiration to the story of the great Vishwamitra who, by the practice of the severest austerities through thousand-year periods of self-renunciation won such rewards of the soul-force that the gods themselves trembled lest he should use it to destroy the three worlds, and Brahma himself had to approach him and confer upon him the supreme rank of Brahminhood before he could be induced to be at rest....

"In none of the great religions of the world has more *metaphysical subtlety* been expended in probing the mystery of existence and the nature of the Divine Being.

Hinduism has no dogmas. It allows immense latitude for the boldest speculations of which the human mind is capable."

In her glorious past India achieved Millenniums not through an ant-hill civilisation based on large-scale machine production, but by practising the virtues of disinterested service and sacrifice and accepting voluntary poverty, as the ancient Indian sages discovered the spiritual law that prosperity always follows in the wake of labour and love, or labour of love, and that material prosperity pursued for its own sake was never achieved by anybody. This great Truth was explained by Leo Tolstoy thus :

"The gospels teach the way of life, and by advancing on this way it happens that material welfare is reached. It is indeed attained, but is not the aim. If the aim of the Gospel teaching were limited to the attainment of material welfare, then this material welfare would not be attained.

"The aim is higher and more distant. The aim of the teaching is not dependant on material welfare; it is the salvation of the soul, i. e., of that divine element which has been enclosed in man. This salvation is attained by renouncing personal life and therefore also material welfare, and by striving after the welfare of one's neighbours—by love. And it is only by this endeavour that men will, incidentally, attain the greatest welfare of all—the Kingdom of God upon earth.

"By striving after personal welfare, neither personal nor general welfare is attained. By striving after self-forgetfulness both personal and general welfare are attained.

"The one means is to reveal to men their true welfare, and to show them that wealth not only is not a blessing, but even divests men from welfare by hiding from them their true welfare.

"There is only one means, and that is to stop up the hole of worldly desire. This alone would give equally distributed heat. And this is exactly the opposite of what

the Socialists say and do—trying to augment production, and therefore the general mass of wealth.”

The Socialist doctrine is a mere means to an end—human happiness. Religion is the end and, indeed, true religion contains the highest from of Socialism, that of complete selflessness and self-denial instead of the ideal of equal distribution of wealth. A civilisation based on the concept of self-interest—enlightened or unenlightened—has within it seeds of its own destruction, for the roots of war and conflict are to be found in the idea that an individual can possibly be happy at the expense of another.

So long as the individuals are selfish, corrupt and ambitious, and there are no checks against their coming into power, any system of planned polity or controlled economy, howsoever perfected, would be liable to abuse.

Unless we strike at the root of disease by reforming human nature, modern civilisation based upon the idea of achieving happiness by perfect organisation on the material and social level is bound to crash and crumble.

As observed by Dr. S. H. Miller, Dean of Harvard Divinity School, U. S. A., in his article, ‘Religion of Tomorrow’.*

“The ancient dogmas no longer dominate the imagination ; the shape of life has changed ; the patterns of truth are different ; the questions have new terms ; the doubts have deeper dimensions ; the hunger of the heart and mind has been enlarged. The churches of today are addressing themselves, however, in a dead language to situations and issues that no longer exist. If religion is to have any real place in the modern world, it will have to undergo a radical revolution....

“The only religion that counts is one which is radical enough to engage in the world’s basic troubles. If it cannot do that, then it can do nothing to merit God’s concern or the world’s respect. Religion which is

* ‘Religious Digest’ (July-Sep. 1961), P. 58.

interested only in itself, in its prestige and success, in its institutions and ecclesiastical niceties is worse than vanity; it is incestuous."

To the same effect we have from a journal, "*Fellowship in Prayer*" (Aug. '61 issue)*:

"The real religion, the only religion, is the realisation of Truth, of God; or the divine Self in all beings—and then to act upon this realisation in the world of men. We need a few hundred people who can do this, a few hundred brave men and women who are bold enough to love the Truth at all costs, to practise the highest truths in their lives under all circumstances. If we can find some people, or help to produce them, we could turn this earth into heaven overnight."

So also it was observed by Swami Vivekananda :

"If a very small fractional part of human beings living today can put aside the idea of selfishness, narrowness and littleness, the earth will become a paradise tomorrow; but with machines and improvements of material knowledge only, it will never be. These only increased misery, as oil poured on fire increases the flame all the more. Without the knowledge of the Spirit, all material knowledge is only adding fuel to fire, only giving into the hands of selfish men one more instrument to take what belongs to others, to live upon the life of others, instead of giving up his life for them."

"Is it practical?—is another question. Can it be practised in modern society? Truth does not pay homage to any society, ancient or modern. Society has to pay homage to truth or die. Societies should be moulded upon truth, and truth has not to adjust itself to society. If such a noble truth as unselfishness cannot be practised in society, it is better for a man to give up society and go into the forests.... That society is the greatest, where the highest truths become practical.... If society is not

*[Pub. from No. 22, East, 29th Street, New York 16, N. Y., U.S.A.]

— fit for the highest truths, make it so, and the sooner, the better."

As observed by a scientist, Professor A. V. Hill, F. R. S., in his address delivered on July 23, 1946 at the twenty-first anniversary of the British Institute of Philosophy on '*The need for Moral and Intellectual Leadership*' :

— "To take a physical analogy, reason by producing consistency and agreement may decrease, instead of increasing, the entropy, the state of randomness or disorder, of human society; may save it from the uniformity of chaos to which all systems, in the absence of intelligent choice, are bound to tend. But reason alone cannot ensure progress or even stability : employed by clever, wicked men for their own ends it may produce mistrust and hatred, conflict and disorder. Scientific invention and discovery, for example, are necessary to human progress : but used without ethical restraint they can propagate fear and facilitate destruction. Some factor additional to reason is necessary if the human race, or at least if civilised man, is to survive."

Reason has its limitations, and cannot explain the riddle of existence. Intellect has its pragmatic value and works all right in its own sphere for practical purposes, but too much stress on it blocks the way to real knowledge. According to Bergson the world suffers from too much Intellect, and it is now time for us to dethrone the Goddess of Reason, and relight the candle before the ikon of Intuition. After Kant and Hegel, the West has been reluctant to accept Bergson's Intuitionism. But even Aristotle, the father of European logic, had to admit, "God is the meeting ground of all contradictions," and Schopenhauer exclaimed : "Consistency is the hobgoblin of human mind."

There is a super-normal or supra-mental source of knowledge called Intuition—*Prajna* or *Pratibhaja*. Intuition literally means "sense of sight" (intuitus). It is in fact integral knowledge that comes from spiritual insight or supra-mental experience. Such a knowledge may go beyond reason, but is not anti-rational. It is the crowning phase of

human evolution. Thus intellect and intuition are complimentary to each other. In fact, intuition is never fully attained without intense intellectual discipline and strenuous ethical effort. This supra-conscious awareness is entirely consistent with our concept of an evolutionary progression from one state of consciousness to another. The conception of a purposive conscious universe with many degrees and levels of awareness, a continuum of conscious states that reaches from the lowest form of life to the very heart of the universe itself is quite in consonance with the teachings of all great religions of the world. Even if we may not accept the cosmology laid down by them, we cannot now deny the existence of supra-conscious levels of awareness to which our teachers, thinkers, creative artists, scientists and mystics down the ages have testified, and who have been a source of inspiration and intuitional understanding to us. In fact, the evidence for the existence of a supra-conscious level of consciousness is almost overwhelming, if not conclusive.

Vedanta is based on revelation, not ratiocination. The sages to whom the truth of Vedanta was revealed were in no doubt about the truth. They lived and died in the security of a mystery solved for ever.

The ideals of unselfishness and disinterested service have got to be realised in the body-politic if it is to adhere together and bring peace to the world. A universal peace can be achieved only if universal one-ness of life is felt everywhere. Religion alone can do that. The ideal of Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man is the only royal road to good will, understanding and peace. No social or economic revolution, devoid of spiritual values, can ever solve the problem of peace. What is required is a spiritual revolution inspired by religious and social ideals that will inspire human hearts to attain the highest good without the slightest thought of injury to any one. Man needs once more to light his altar fires, the fires of a "humble and contrite heart," to recognise, to honour, and to love his Creator. The first Commandment given and accepted by the Christian people was, "Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind." And the second was that 'Man should love his neighbour as himself.'

We have got to fully imbibe the truth of the words of St. Paul: "God, that made the world and all things thereinhath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth.....for we are His offspring." If we fail to do that, the day of reckoning is not far off, when, as Prophet Isaiah says: "The lofty looks of men shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day."

Here we may commend the following poem composed by Cynthia Halpern:

Let the Reign of Peace Begin

Nor red nor brown, nor black nor white,
 Nor skin of any hue;
 Nor Buddhist nor Mohammedan,
 Nor Christian, Hindu, Jew
 Nor communist nor capitalist,
 Nor "ist" of any kind;
 Nor warring ideology,
 Contrived by mortal mind
 Nor tiny earth, nor outer space,
 Nor atom, sun or star;
 Nor east or west, nor north or south,
 Nor nation near or far
 But in Life's Essential ONENESS,
 Proving all are One and kin,
 Behold our True Humanity—
 Let the Reign of PEACE begin !

III. CALL OF RELIGION AND DHARMA

All religions teach that a certain crisis comes at one time or another in the life of every one and every nation, which is meant by a kind Providence to give a shock or a jolt to make us realize that life on this earth, that we value so much, is but a bad dream, and that far from being a bed of roses it is really a bed of thorns. For instance, the very first lesson taught by Lord Buddha is that life is full of pain, suffering and sorrow, and the cup of misery is always full. As we have in Arnold's 'Light of Asia':—

*"Since pleasures end in pain, and youth in age,
And love in loss, and life in hateful death,
And death in unknown lives, which will but yoke
Men to their wheel again to whirl the round
Of false delights and woes that are not false."*

The *Bhagavad-Gita* has referred to this world as '*anityam, asukham, duhkalyam, ashashvatam*' "impermanent, unhappy, the abode of sorrow, transient." As observed by Schopenhauer in '*The World As Will and Idea*':

"Life is evil because as soon as want and suffering permit rest to a man, *ennui* is at once so near that he necessarily requires diversion.....Life swings like a pendulum backward and forward between pain and *ennui*.....After man had transformed all pains and torments into the conception of hell, there remained nothing for heaven except *ennui*.....Thus, in proportion as knowledge attains to distinctness, as consciousness ascends, pain also increases, and reaches its highest degree in man. And then, again, the more distinctly a man knows—the more intelligent he is—the more pain he has; the man who is gifted with genius suffers most of all."

As observed by Swami Vivekananda in one of his London lectures:

"The history of the world shows that evil is continuous—

ly increasing quantity, as well as good. Take the lowest man; he lives in the forest. His sense of enjoyment is very small, and so also his power to suffer. His misery is entirely on the sense plane. If he does not get plenty of food he is miserable; but give him plenty of food and freedom to rove and hunt, and he is perfectly happy. His happiness consists only in the senses, and so does his misery also. But if that man increases in knowledge, his happiness will increase, the intellect will open to him, and his sense enjoyment will evolve into intellectual enjoyment. He will feel pleasure in reading a beautiful poem, and a mathematical problem will be of absorbing interest to him. But, with these, the finer nerves will become more and more susceptible to miseries of mental pain, of which the savage does not think.....

— “Take your country, which is the richest in the world, and which is more luxurious than any other, and see how intense is the misery, how many more lunatics you have, compared with other races, only because the desires are so keen. A man must keep up a high standard of living....The wheel of society is rolling on; it stops not for the widows’ tears or the orphans’ wails. This is the state of things everywhere. Your sense of enjoyment is developed, your society is very much more beautiful than some others. You have so many more things to enjoy. But those who have fewer, have much less misery.....

“The misery in the world is like chronic rheumatism in the body; drive it from one part and it goes to another, drive it from there and you will feel it somewhere else. Whatever you do, it is still there.....

.....Whole countries and cities are ruined by cheating. That does not show much progress. I do not see that what you call progress in the world, is other than the multiplication of desires. If one thing is obvious to me it is this, that desires bring all misery; it is the state of the beggar, who is always begging for something, and unable to see anything without the wish to possess it, is always longing, longing for more. If the power to satisfy our desires is increased in arithmetical progression, the

power of desire is increased in geometrical progression. The sum total of happiness and misery in this world is at least the same throughout. If a wave rises in the ocean it makes a hollow somewhere. If happiness comes to one man, unhappiness comes to another, or perhaps to some animal. Men are increasing in numbers and some animals are decreasing; we are killing them off, and taking their land; we are taking all means of sustenance from them. How can we say, then, that happiness is increasing? The strong race eats up the weaker, but do you think that the strong race will be happy? No; they will begin to kill each other. I do not see, on practical grounds, how this world can become a heaven. Facts are against it.....

"Time, the avenger of everything, comes, and nothing is left. He swallows up the saint and the sinner, the king and the peasant, the beautiful and the ugly; he leaves nothing. Every thing is rushing toward that one goal, destruction. None can stem the tide, none can hold it back for a minute. We may try to forget it in the same way that persons in a plague-stricken city try to create oblivion by drinking, dancing and other vain attempts and so becoming paralysed. So we are trying to forget, trying to create oblivion by all sorts of sense-pleasures. And this is Maya.

"Is there no hope then? True it is that we are all slaves of Maya, born in Maya, and live in Maya. Is there then no way out, no hope? That we are all miserable, that this world is really a prison, that even our so-called trailing beauty is but a prison house, and that even our intellects and minds are prison-houses have been known for ages upon ages. There has never been a man, there has never been a human soul, who has not felt this sometime or other, however he may talk.....Is there any way out? We find that with all this, with this terrible fact before us, in the midst of sorrow and suffering, even in this world where life and death are synonymous, even here, there is a small voice that is ringing through all ages, through every country, and in every heart: "This my Maya is divine, made up of qualities, and very difficult to cross. Yet those that come unto Me, cross the river of life."

"Come unto Me, all that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you the rest." This is the voice that is leading us forward. Man has heard it, and is hearing it all through the ages. This voice comes to man when everything seems to be lost, and hope has fled, when man's dependence on his own strength has been crushed down, and everything seems to melt away between his fingers, and life is a hopeless ruin. Then he hears it. This is called Religion."

A distinguished psychiatrist, Dr. Carl Jung, writes in his work, *'Modern Man in Search of a Soul'* (P. 264):

"During the past thirty years people from all civilised countries of the earth have consulted me. I have treated many hundreds of patients. Among all my patients in the second half of life—that is to say, over thirty-five—there has not been one whose problem in the last resort was not that of finding a religious outlook on life. It is safe to say that every one fell ill because he had lost that which the living religions of every age have given to their followers, and none of them has been really healed who did not regain his religious outlook."

Quoting the above authority in his work, *'How to stop worrying and start living?'* Dale Carnegie writes:

"On the average, some one commits suicide in the United States every thirty-five minutes. On the average, some one goes insane every hundred and twenty seconds. Most of these suicides—and probably many of the tragedies of insanity—could have been prevented if these people had only had the solace and peace that are found in religion and prayer."

As the facile pen of Voltaire, the greatest rationalist of his time, wrote :—

"Beasts and men suffer almost without ceasing; men suffer the more because, not only is the gift of thought often a source of torture, but this faculty of thinking always makes them fear death, which the beast cannot foresee. Man is a very miserable being, having but a few

hours of rest, a few moments of satisfaction, and a long series of days of sorrow in his short life. Everybody admits and says this; and it is true.

“They who have protested that all is well are charlatans

“Yet the Atheist must admit that there is in nature an active, intelligent, necessary, eternal principle, and that from this principle comes all we call good and evil.”

As Epicurius said, “Either God wished to prevent evil and could not do so; or he was able to do so, and did not wish.”

It is but trite to say that life is not all smooth, that failures are inevitable, as the success of a few are built on the failure of many. Insecurity is another reason for our lack of peace. It has been said that fifty per cent of our worries are centred round the past, forty per cent round the future, and only ten per cent regarding the present. The entire history of civilisation from the cave-man stage to the present-day world of nuclear energy is a struggle to find progressive security for mankind. But for all his achievement man finds there is no mental security.

This mental insecurity, all religious teach, can only be removed through mental resignation to the Lord. Self-surrender to Him is the only way to lessen our anxiety and the resulting restlessness of mind. As a child is happy on its mother's lap, so man can be happy on the lap of God. We should remember the assurance of Lord Krishna to Arjuna in the Bhagavad-Gita :

कीन्तेय प्रतिजानीहि न मे भक्तः प्रणश्यति ॥ (८/३१)

“Swear, O Arjuna, My devotee will never perish.” (IX/31)
Lord Krishna also says in the Bhagavad Gita:—

ईश्वरः सर्वं भूतानां हृद्देशेऽर्जुन तिष्ठति ।

आमयन्सर्वं भूतानि यन्त्रारूढानि मायया ॥

तमेव शरणं गच्छ सर्वं भावेन भारत ।

तत्प्रसातदशेषेण यथेच्छसि तथा कुरु ॥ (XVIII/61-62)

— "Know Arjun, Divine dwells in hearts of all creatures and moves them by His illusive Maya like a pot on the circling wheel. O son of Bharat, unreservedly dedicate thou to Him. By His Grace thou shall attain Peace and Liberation."

Says the Christ, "Father I glorify in Thee."

(St. John, 17)

"Thine is the Kingdom, the Power and the Glory."

(Lord's Prayer)

As was beautifully put by an illumined One*:

"The Mother goes to her child many a time during the day to call the child back home while it is out at play, but the child heeds Her not. She calls and She beckons and even chides in vain, but the child does not even look toward Her. Then out of Her compassion and Mother's love She gently pulls up the child by its ears. For a moment the child becomes disconsolate, but soon forgets all about its play as the Mother gathers it in Her bosom, and takes it back home."

"Try to become a pilgrim on the path to the Ultimate; then there will be no anxieties, no misfortunes, no straying into by-paths."

"It is man's duty to try and cultivate faith and devotion. Blows are characteristic of life in the world; thus man is taught to understand what the nature of the world is, and then detachment from pleasure and enjoyment ensues."

"When there is a choice between the pleasurable and the elevating, one should always choose the latter. By practising renunciation in the endeavour to draw nearer to God, one moves but towards one's own Self. Truly, the striving for his own perfection is man's duty as man."

To a question being put, 'Why does God give pain to men?' the answer was as follows :—

"This can be explained by a short story. When Hanuman was building the bridge to Lanka by throwing stones into the sea a squirrel was hurt. It complained about Hanuman

* Sree Sree Anandamayee Ma.

to Rama. Rama asked what punishment should be given to Hanuman. The squirrel said, "Hanuman should be trodden on by you." Rama did accordingly and asked Hanuman not to commit such mistakes again. Hanuman said, "I will very often commit such faults so that I may repeatedly feel the pressure of your feet." There is also a good side to the pains sent by God."

"By sorrow does the Lord dispel sorrow, and by adversity does He destroy adversity. When this is done He sends no more suffering."

To another question being put, 'Why is the Play so full of tragedy?' the answer was as follows :—

"Everything happens according to His Will. Will any one give more suffering to one's own self than one can bear?"

"At all times let patience be your stronghold. Say to yourself : "Lord, everything thou doest is for the highest good !" Pray for the power of endurance. Nothing happens that is not an expression of God's Grace; verily, all is His Grace. Anchored in patience, bearing everything, abide by His Name and live joyously."

To another question being put, 'How much longer shall we have to weep?' the answer was :

"So long as you do not realize who you are."

To another question being put, 'How much of His Grace does He bestow in punishment and how much in compassion?' the answer was :

"God does not calculate. Whatever is necessary for the real good of His children, that He does."

Vedants teaches, there is no punishment for a man who has learnt to walk, which means accepting God's will as one's own will, as a dutiful wife accepts the will of her Lord as her own, and becoming totally desireless for selfish ends. For such a man entire nature becomes a servant and

there is no want, no suffering, no sorrow, no punishment. He who places implicit trust in God and remembers Him constantly is free from worries. He reconciles himself to every situation that falls to his lot. For him contentment is a continual feast.

"Self forever dwells within the hearts of all. When a man is free from desire, his mind and senses purified, he beholds the glory of the Self and is without sorrow."

[Katha Up. (I. ii. 20)]

"He who knows Brahman becomes Brahman.... He passes beyond all sorrow. He overcomes evil. Freed from the fetters of ignorance he becomes immortal."

[Mundaka Up. (III. ii. 9)]

"Wherefore he who has crossed that boundary, and has realised the Self, if he is blind, ceases to be blind ; if he is wounded, ceases to be wounded ; if he is afflicted, ceases to be afflicted. When that boundary is crossed, night becomes day ; for the world of Brahman is light itself."

[Chandogya Up.]

The highest Vedantic teaching is, 'That thou art.' God is your very life and soul, and dwells in the hearts of us all, and you are not separate from Him. In fact, God and you are one. God is all and all-in-all. If you recognise this truth, you can lead a life of fullness, freedom, bliss and peace. Then divine power reveals itself in all your thoughts, feelings and actions. How grand is the Self ! It is still grander to know that you are the Self. Let your life be radiant with this supreme realization. In the words of the German mystic, Meister Eckhart: "If I am to know God directly, I must become completely He and He I : so that this He and this I become and are one I."

दुःख में सुमिरन सब करें, सुख में करे न कोय ।

जो सुख में सुमरन करे, तो दुःख काहे को होय ॥

"While in distress, every one remembers God, but none remembers Him while having a good time. If any one were to remember Him while having a good time, then why should any calamity befall him?"

Or as Sant Tulsidas says in the Ramayana about a conversation between Lord Sri Rama and Bhakta Hanuman:

वचन कार्य मन ममगति जाही । सपनेहु बूझिय विपत्तिक ताही ॥

"Do you think any one who depends on me in thought, word and deed can ever dream of adversity?"

कह हनुमंत विपत्ति प्रभुसोई । जब तब सुमिरन भजन न होई ॥

"Said Hanuman, 'There is no misfortune other than ceasing to remember and adore you.'"

At another place, says Lord Sri Ram to Narada in reply to his question why he was not granted the desire of his heart for marriage :—

सुनु मुनि तोहि कहौ सहरोसा । भजहि मोहि तजि सकल भरोसा ॥

करो सदा तिनकी रखवारी । जिमि बालकहि राख महतारी ॥

गह शिशु बच्छ अनल अहि बाई । तैह राखै जननी अरु गाई ॥

"O Muni! I tell you this in the fullness of my pleasure that those who pray to Me without placing any reliance on anything else, I always protect them in the same way as a mother protects her child, or the cow protects its calf when it runs to catch the fire or the serpent."

To quote from yet another place, says Lord Sri Rama:

मन गुण गावत पुलक शरीरा । गद् गद् गिरा नयन बह नीरा ॥

काम आदि मद दम्भन जाके । तात निरन्तर वश मै ताके ॥

"One who sings my glories with hair-raising fervour and full-throated joy and with tears trickling from his eyes, and one who does not suffer from desire, egoism, hypocrisy, etc., O friend! I always remain under the control of such an one."

वचन कर्म मन मोरि गति, भजै करै निष्काम ।

तिनके हृदय कमल महै, करौ सदा विश्राम ॥

"One who by word, deed and mind constantly depends on Me, and prays to Me disinterestedly, I have My abode in the lotus of his heart."

Or, as a Sufi poet Zafar* says:—

* His real name was Bahadur Shah, the last Mogul King of Delhi.

जफर यादपी उसको न जानियेगा, हो वह कैमे ही साहिबे फ़हमोज़का ।
जिसे तेज मे यादे खदा न रहनी, जिसे तैश में खौफ़ी ख़दा न रहा ॥

"O Zafar, do not consider that person to be a man, howsoever learned and intelligent he be, who does not remember God in his moments of pleasure, and who has no fear of God in his moments of wrathfulness."

दिया हमने दुई को जो अपनी मिटा, वह पर्दा सा बीच मे था न रहा ।
रहे पर्दे मे अब न वह पर्दानशीं, कोई दूसरा उसके सिवा न रहा ॥

"When I obliterated the consciousness of duality—the difference between the Self and not-Self—the intervening curtain disappeared. The One behind the veil no longer remained a veiled One, and then there remained none else but Him."

Religions further teach, the cause of all sufferings is in ourselves alone, not outside. Lord Buddha says, "You suffer from yourselves alone; no one compels you." The doctrine of Karma working out the Cosmic laws of Evolution through rebirth not merely furnishes a cogent explanation for life as we see it, but is also a source of consolation to us.

Lord Buddha was not interested in theology, but was very much interested in ethics. He said, "I know nothing about the mystery of God but I know something about the misery of man." The remedy prescribed by him for all human suffering consists in the noble Eight-fold Path of righteousness—right belief, right aspiration, right speech, right action, right living, right effort, right thought and right tranquility. These practices lead an individual to give up the craving of passions, and thereby emancipate him from the thralldom of suffering, and ultimately *Nirvana* (absolute bliss) is attained by a total extinction of all desires.

According to *Majjhimanikaya* 26, Lord Buddha, after attaining enlightenment under the Bodhi-tree near Gaya, set out upon his world mission with these words:—

*"Now to Varanasi Town I press
To set the Truth-Wheel whirling round,
In this blind world I go to sound
The throbbing drum of deathlessness."*

(Transl. by Silacara)

Reaching the outskirts of Varanasi, in the Deer Park at Sarnath, Lord Buddha first approached the monks, who had been his companions in the search for truth before his enlightenment, and he called to them: "Open your ears, O monks; the deliverance from death is found!" The monks understood that the man who stood before them, was no more the simple ascetic Gotama but one who had passed through an extraordinary spiritual experience.

To them Lord Buddha preached the first sermon. He pounded therein the doctrine of the Middle Way, which avoids the two extremes of selfish enjoyment and self-mortification, and leads to enlightenment. The Middle Path, Lord Buddha taught, was the Noble Eightfold Path of righteousness. Its first step, "*Samma ditthi*" (*Skt. Samyak drishii*), i.e., "perfect understanding" consisted in the understanding of four fundamental facts of life, which Lord Buddha defined as the Four Noble (Aryan) Truths: (1) That sorrow is everywhere. (2) Any contact with the world of sorrow leads only to sorrow. (3) Desirelessness uproots sorrow. (4) The Noble Eightfold Path that leads to Nirvana (enlightenment).

The way out, according to all religions, lies in the cessation of desires. Because we are most of the time desiring to get hold of something, or to get rid of something, we are most of the time unhappy. The desire to get rid of something is due to fear. So desire and fear are the two enemies of happiness. We cannot put them away by sheer will-power. We may, like the stoics, wrestle with them and succeed in over-coming them for a while. But the victory does not last, and finally we give up the fight.

Desire tells us, each time, 'Now get thou this, and then you shall be happy.' We believe it implicitly and set about getting it. We are unhappy for-wanting it, but we forget the unhappiness in the effort. If we do not get it, we have to suffer. Neither are we happy if we get it; for desire then finds something else for us to strive for; and we fail to see how desire is fooling us all the time. The fact is, desire is like a bottomless pit which one can never fill up, or like the all-consuming fire which burns the fiercer, the more we feed it.

न जातु कामः कामानामुपभोगेन शाम्यति ।

हविषा कृष्ण वत्सर्व भूय एवाभिवर्धते ॥

"Verily, by indulging in objects of pleasure desire for pleasure is not satisfied, but revives just as smouldering fire gets ablaze when sacrificial *ghee* (clarified butter) is poured over it."

As desire is without end, so is fear; for the things that fear tells us to avoid are without end. Says Lord Buddha:

"The man whose mind is free from craving has no fear."

"What is bondage? Not bonds of iron or hemp or wood—but attachment is bondage."

"Just as a cornfield is ruined by weeds, man is ruined by attachment."

"Grief comes of what is pleasing, fear comes of what is pleasing. One who is liberated from the love for the pleasing is also liberated from grief and fear."

Thus all religions teach us: So long as desire and fear have sway over us, we shall never reach happiness. Sages have ever taught that true happiness belongs to our own inner nature, that pleasure does not reside in external objects at all, but is due to a release of our own natural happiness. As Edward Carpenter says of desire:

"Why thy body—as needs must happen at times—is carried along on the wind of passion, say not thou, 'I desire this or that' ;

"For the 'I' neither desires nor fears anything, but is free and in everlasting glory, dwelling in heaven and pouring out joy like the sun on all sides.

"Let not that precious thing by any confusion be drawn down and entangled in the world of opposites, and of Death and suffering.

"For as a light-house beam sweeps with incredible speed over sea and land, yet the lamp moves not at all.

"So while thy body of desire is (and must be by the law of its nature) incessantly in motion in the world of suffering, the 'I' high up above is fixed in heaven.

"Therefore I say let no confusion cloud thy mind about this matter;

*"But ever when desire knocks at thy door,
Though thou grant it admission and entreat it hospitably—
as in duty bound—*

"Fence it yet gently off from thy true self,

"Lest it should tear and rend thee."

Desire creates fear. It binds and creates delusion, and is the root of all misery. On the contrary, desirelessness creates peace of mind and makes one fearless. Real peace of mind belongs only to the God-realized souls. It is not possible to be free of all desires unless our consciousness is centred in God. God-consciousness is free of all desires, as all desires are only in body-consciousness. Peace of mind and God-realisation are not two but one. Complete annihilation of the little self, the ego, is the price to get the Peace of mind. Life devoid of Peace of mind is hades, and not worth living. A selfish man can never have peace of mind, for he is always thinking of himself, sitting in his own well of deep ignorance, whereas the Man of God-realisation is ever inhaling and exhaling Peace with each and every breath, for Peace is his birth-right. As observed by Swami Ramdas*:

"God demands of you the full price before He can be yours. Verily, God is priceless. None can get Him without paying anything but the full price, that is, your entire being in all its aspects. In fact, dedication of one life is nothing, compared to the absolute freedom, peace and joy you get from Him. Even millions of lives offered to Him are only meagre recompense for the unimaginably precious and magnificent reward you get.

"You know, if you want to pass a thread through the eye of a needle, you have to twist all the fibres of it to a point and then only will the thread get through the eye. If even a single fibre sticks out, the thread cannot pass. So, if you reserve a single desire—even a petty one in

* 'Religions Digest' (Jan.-March 1962) P. 36.

your surrender to the Divine, you cannot have Him. All your desires must converge and concentrate on Him. Then only your prayer will be accepted by Him and fulfilled. This is the pre-condition for inheriting His glory, power, light, joy and peace."

As observed by Aldous Huxley:*

"The modern conception of man's intellectual relationship to the universe was anticipated by the Buddhist doctrine that desire is the source of illusion. To the extent that it has overcome desire, a man is free from illusion. This is true not only of the man of science, but also of the artist and the philosopher. Only the disinterested man can transcend common-sense and pass beyond the boundaries of animal or average-sensual human life. The mystic exhibits disinterestedness in the highest degree possible to human beings and is therefore able to transcend ordinary limitations more completely than the man of science, the artist or the philosopher. That which he discovers beyond the frontiers of the average sensual man's universe is a spiritual reality underlying and uniting all apparently separate existents—a reality with which he can merge himself and from which he can draw moral and even physical powers which, by ordinary standards, can only be described as supernormal.

.... 'Again, to the ordinary man, Spinoza's statement that 'Blessedness is not the reward of virtue, but is virtue it elf' seems simply untrue. Being virtuous is, for him, a most tedious and distressing process. But it is clear that to some one who has trained himself in goodness, virtue really is blessedness, while the life of the ordinary man, with its petty vices and its long spells of animal thoughtlessness and insentience, seems a real torture. In view of the fact that knowing is conditioned by being and that being can be profoundly modified by training, we are justified in ignoring most of the arguments by which non-mystics have sought to discredit the experience of mystics. The being of a colour-blind man is such that he is not

* Quoted from 'Ends And Means' (Chatto and Windus).

competent to pass judgment on a painting..... Similarly, the being of a non-mystical person is such that he cannot understand the nature of the mystic's intuitions..... This training is one which he will certainly find extremely tedious; for it involves, first, the leading of life of constant awareness and unremitting moral effort, second, steady practice in the technique of meditation, which is probably about as difficult as the technique of violin-playing. But, however, tedious, the training can be undertaken by any one who wishes to do so."

A mystic is a person for whom God is the one reality of life, the supreme object of love. Mysticism is the passionate longing of the soul for God, the unseen Reality. It has been called the science of the love of God. It is the cult of *Bhakti* or devotion. As explained by St. Augustine: "Thou hast made us for Thyself, and our hearts shall find no rest save in Thee." In the language of Vedanta, self-realization is yet another dimension to our being. It is the fourth state of consciousness called *Turiya*, the other three states with which we are familiar, being waking, dreaming and state of deep sleep.

On a question being put to an illumined One* 'Suppose one has intense faith in God and leaves everything to Him and does not consult a doctor, can one be cured even so?' the answer was as follows:—

"There are two ways: one way is to have intense faith that God will do all that is needed and pray to Him to be cured. If one has reached a state of genuine faith it will have the power to bring about the cure. If on the other hand, one's faith is merely superficial, it will not act.

"The other way is, not to pray to God for anything, but to leave everything to Him. Then, whether one gets well or not is exactly the same."

We find the rich, who have an abundance of things, are not exactly happy; nor are the poor, who have very little, exactly unhappy, but all alike, if and when they get sound, dreamless sleep, are supremely happy. Happiness doesn't

* Shree Shree Anandamayee Ma.

depend on outward conditions. It depends on inner conditions. It isn't what one has that makes one happy, but what one thinks about it. "Nothing is good or bad," said Shakespeare, "but thinking makes it so." Abe Lincoln once remarked that "most folks are about as happy as they make up their minds to be."

It, therefore, follows that the source of abiding happiness lies within our very 'selves' and it is man's highest privilege and destiny to discover that source and attain eternal bliss.

Lord Buddha was once reported to have said that he could not enjoy *Nirvana* so long as there was still a single being left on earth unblessed by it. To the same effect is the Hindu prayer quoted by Schopenhauer in his '*Basis of Morality*':

"May all that have life be delivered from suffering !"

"Religion," as observed by *Bharat-Ratna* Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, "is a matter of experience. It is not an awakening from a swoon, but a transformation of one's being. It is not an addition to one's intellectual furniture, but an exaltation of one's personality into the plane of the universal spirit. It is *Brahma-darsana*—insight into Reality, a direct awareness of the world of values....."

"Life is open only to life. Religious experience, when genuine, is characterized by vividness, directness, freshness and joy. In it we feel the impact of Reality. It is spiritual discovery, not creation. The men of experience feel the presence of God and do not argue about it. The shoals and shallows of existence are submerged in the flood-tide of joy."

Religion is the divinity in man, and is the link between man and God. The one purpose of religion (Re-LEGGIA, to reunite) is to bind together the hearts of human beings to each other and to God. Says the Veda:

"*Assemble; speak with one another;
Let your minds be of one accord.*"

(Rg. X. 191—2).

*"Common be your aim, and your hearts united;
Let your needs be in full agreement so that an excellent
common status of life may be achieved."*

(Rg. X. 191.4)

"All mankind are like common members of a family.

*There is none superior among them, none inferior by birth.
God is the Father of all beings and the earth is their Mother.
It is only by living upto this ideal that people can truly live
in peace and prosperity."*

(Rg. 5. 59.15)

Vedic universality requires man to establish friendship with the whole universe, with all other beings. Says the Veda:

*"May all beings look on me with the eye of a friend;
May I look on all beings with the eye of a friend;
May I look on one another with the eye of a friend."*

(Yaj. XXXVI. 18)

So also says Baha'u'llah:

*"The Earth is but one country, and mankind its citizens."
"Ye are the fruits of one tree, and the leaves of one branch."*

In the words of Vishnusharmanam in the *Hitopdesha*:

*"Small souls inquire, belongs this man
To our own race, or land or clan?
But the large-hearted men embrace
As brothers, all the human race."*

"Metta", love to all that lives, is the first of the Four Supreme Virtues or Brama Viharnas taught by Buddhism. This all-embracing love rises above parties, above nations, above peoples, above races, to the whole of humanity, yea, to all that lives. There is an oft-repeated Buddhist saying, which sums up all morality: "What you do not wish that others should do to you, that do not do to them."

In the *Kakacupama Sutta* Lord Buddha says:

*"O monks, even when highway robbers sever your limbs
with a double-handed saw, if you entertain thoughts of hatred*

toward them you will not be acting according to my teachings. To entertain hatred towards an enemy is like taking clods of filth in order to strike him. It first soils our hand before polluting the body of the adversary. Even so, hatred soils the purity of the mind and incurs us in suffering both here and hereafter."

Lord Buddha was of course a paragon of universal love. He loved all alike—Devadatta his avowed foe; the robber Angulimāla who approached him with a drawn sword to attack him; the elephant Dhanapala that was sent to kill him, and his only son Rahula.

The realisation of the unity of life and the truth of the maxim 'That thou art' (तत्त्वमसि) necessarily leads to a spirit of fearlessness (*Abhaya*), as there can be no fear when there is really no "otherness."

On one occasion Lord Buddha was camping at the bank of Rohini when there was a dispute over the distribution of river water between the people of Kapilvastu and Koliya. "Only a small amount of water has remained in the river," said the Sakya people, "It will be needed for our agriculture. If the river is divided in two parts by a dam, there shall be no water for our fields." "But we too are facing the same difficulties," stated the Koliya people, "we shall like to use water ourselves."

Matters came to a head, and it seemed war was inevitable. On coming to know of it, Lord Buddha decided to interfere. One fine morning he was roaming on the bank of the river. When the soldiers on both sides saw him, they took out their weapons and paid obeisance to him.

"What is the cause of this movement?" queried Buddha. "The water of Rohini, Lord," replied all the soldiers together.

"Well, brothers, will you tell me what is the price of water?" asked Buddha. "Nothing. It is available everywhere without any price whatsoever," replied the soldiers on both the sides.

"Will you tell me, brothers, what is the value of soldiers?" Buddha put another question. "Soldiers are invaluable things,

Lord." replied the soldiers realizing the gravity of their mistake.

"How far, brothers, will it be proper to kill one another for the sake of water, then?" Buddha asked again. "Lord, we have realized our mistake. Now we shall try to find out a solution. To shed blood of soldiers for water is definitely childish. You have given us true knowledge, we are certainly grateful to you," said the grateful soldiers. They fell at the feet of Buddha. And he gave them a priceless preaching:

"Happiness lies in becoming enemyless, even when the supposed enemies are standing before you; banish a feeling of enmity from your heart for ever." Said he.

This is the Buddha way of Peace. Says the Dhammapada: (अक्रोधेनजिने क्रोधं) "Conquer anger by non-anger."

The Lord of Compassion taught:

"If you desire to serve Me, serve one that is sick."

"All the means in this life to acquire religious merit have not the value of sixteenth part of Love and Compassion, that liberate the mind."

"To produce Love in one's mind for a single moment is a more commendable deed than to distribute among the poor thrice a day a hundred pots of food."

"As a mother, even at the risk of her own life, protects her son, her only son, so let a man cultivate goodwill without measure among all beings. Let him cultivate goodwill without measure toward the whole world, above, below, around, unstinted, unmixed with any feeling of differing or opposing interests. Let a man remain steadfastly in this state of mind all the while he is awake, whether he is standing, sitting or lying down. This state of heart is the best in the world."

Christ, known as the Prince of Peace, says in the Bible:

"Glory to God in the highest: and earth peace and goodwill toward men. Blessed are the peace-makers, for they shall be called sons of God."

The very word '*Islam*' means 'Peace.'

The 33rd. *Sutra* in Patanjali's Yoga Sutras tells us how to attain (*chitta-prasad*) perfect cheerfulness of mind.

मैत्री करुणा मुदितोपेक्षाणां सुख दुःख पुण्यापुण्य विषयणां
भावना तन्निवृत्त प्रसादनम् । (३३)

"The mind (becomes) cheerful by the practice of sympathy, compassion, complacency, and indifference, respectively, towards happiness, misery, virtue and vice (of others)."

That means when others are happy love them, when they are unhappy, have compassion for them; when they live a life of righteousness, be happy; and when they live a life of unrighteousness, ignore them. We forget that there is God Almighty to take care of the world, for it is His creation and not ours, and we need not sit in judgment on doings of others and make ourselves unhappy unnecessarily. As the holy Mother Sree Sarda Devi says:—

"I tell you one thing. If you want peace of the mind, do not find fault with others, rather see your own faults. Learn to make the whole world your own. No one is a stranger, my child, this whole world is your own. When a man sees defects in others, his own mind first gets polluted."

Says Lord Buddha:—

"As rust which forms in iron eats it up, even so one's own evil actions lead to an evil destiny."

"Suffering is the accumulation of evil."

"One who brings sufferings on others can never be happy."

"To refrain from all evil, to achieve good deeds and to purify the mind—this is the teaching of the Tathagata."

"The evils of the body are theft, adultery and murder. The evils of the tongue lying, abuse and slander. The evils of the mind are greed, hatred and jealousy."

So also says the Mahabharata:—

अष्टादश पुराणेषु व्यास वचन द्वयम् ।

परोपकाराय पुण्याय पापाय परपीरणम् ॥

"The essence of eighteen Puranas composed by Vyasa can be summed up in two words: Virtue consists in doing good to others and sin in causing suffering to others."

Bhishma taught Yudhishthira in the Mahabharata, *Anushasana Parva*, (Ch. 152, Sh. 23):—

"Abstention from injury, truth, absence of anger (or forgiveness), and liberality or gifts—these four, O King, do you practise, for these four form eternal virtue."

Again, the Mahabharata, *Anugta Parva* (Ch. 31, 1—3) says:—

"There are three enemies in the world. They are said to be nine-fold according to their Gunas (qualities).

"Exultation, satisfaction and joy—these three qualities belong to Goodness. Cupidity, anger and hatred, these three qualities are said to belong to Darkness. Lassitude, procrastination and delusion—these three qualities belong to ignorance."

In the Mahabharata, *Ashwamedha Parva*, (Ch. III, Sh. 1—2), Vyasa while consoling Yudhishthira in the presence of Lord Krishna, said:—

- "1. O Yudhishthira, your wisdom, I conceive, is not sufficient. None does a work by his own power.
- "2. It is God who engages him in deeds, good or bad, O bestower of honour. What is the cause then for repentance?
- "3. You consider yourself as having perpetrated impious deeds. Do you, therefore, O Bharata, listen to the way in which sins may be removed.
- "4. O Yudhishthira, those who commit sins, can always free themselves from them through penance, sacrifice and gifts.

"5. O King, O foremost of men, sinfu' people are purified by sacrifice, austerities and charity."

Man is born in *Maya*, a child of illusion, relativity and evanescence. He must be reborn in *Satya*, awakening to the Real. That process of regeneration of man from bodily life of ponderables to the Spirit-life of imponderable values, and infinite vision is our second birth, the *dwijahood* which the ancient Greeks called *Metanoia* (an island from which all miseries have fled).

The foremost virtue to be acquired is *Satyam*, Truth, which is the mother of all virtues. In its absence no other virtue shines. Its overwhelming importance is graphically described in the '*Satya-Gita*' in Siva-Purana-Uma Samhita, from which we may quote the following couplets (*Shlokas*):—

सत्यमेव परं ब्रह्म सत्यमेव परं तपः ।

सत्यमेव परोयज्ञः सत्यमेव परं श्रुतम् ॥

"Truth is the supreme Brahman; Truth is supreme penance; Truth is supreme *Yajna* (sacrifice); Truth is the superior knowledge."

सत्यं सुप्तेषु जागति सत्यं च परमं पदम् ।

सत्येनैव धृता पृथ्वी सत्ये सर्वं प्रतिष्ठितम् ॥

"Truth is wakeful when others are asleep; Truth is the most exalted state; the earth is borne by Truth; everything is emblazoned in Truth."

सत्येन वायुरभ्येति सत्येन तपते रवि ।

सत्येनाग्निर्दहत्येव स्वर्गः सत्येन तिष्ठति ॥

"The wind blows on the strength of Truth; the sun shines by virtue of Truth; the fire burns on account of Truth and the heaven exists on account of Truth."

अश्वमेध सहस्रं च सत्यं च तुल्यं धृतम् ।

लक्षाणि क्रतवश्चैव सत्यमेव विशिष्यते ॥

"A thousand Aswamedha sacrifices (for celebrating world conquest) and Truth are on a par; Truth verily excels a lakh of sacrifices (*Yajnas*)."

सत्यमाहुः परं धर्मं सत्यमाहुः परं पदम् ।

सत्यमाहुः परं ब्रह्म तस्यात्सत्यं सदा वदेत् ॥

"Truth is said to be the great *Dharma*; Truth is said to be the most exalted state; Truth is said to be the supreme Brahman; therefore Truth should be spoken always."

As a social virtue, no less important than Truth is the virtue of non-violence. Indeed, there is need for love and compassion not only toward human beings but also toward animal kingdom. Writing in '*The Call Divine*'* Mr. A. B. Davies of Canada concludes his learned article, 'Are we Brother's Keeper' with the following observations:—

"The reasons why the governments of the world do not trust each other, also is found in the fact that *all the belligerent nations are carnivorous (meat-eaters) and we do know that all the carnivor animal species are born fighters and every one of them do distrust each other and every one else.*"

"To rectify matters, to avert war and subsequent annihilation of mankind, it appears that we *Must* give up carnivorous and secular leadership."

It cannot be denied that man's physical, mental and spiritual development depends to a large extent on the purity of food. We may usefully quote the following observations of Geoffrey Hodson writing on 'Vegetarianism' in '*Vegetarian India*':—

"In the attainment of true spiritual vision, strange though it may sound, diet can play a strong part. This is probably why so many schools of spiritual training from the remotest times to the present day have insisted that their students should live on a meat-free diet. The saying, "As I eat so am I," has some truth in it. Animal foods cannot only poison the body and introduce into it the diseases from which food animals are known to suffer, but also animalise human nature, coarsen and desensitise those who live on flesh food. The particular organs in the brain through which the faculty of intuition is said to function (the pineal gland), and the higher intellect which can understand the principle of unity (the pituitary gland),

* (Jan. 1962 issue).

as well as the whole cerebrospinal system, can be desensitised by alcohol, narcotics and animal food, and made more responsive to higher thoughts by abstention and a vegetarian dietary."

Again, writing on 'Vegetarianism' in '*Chetana*', Bombay, the Director, QUINTA IN RETIRO AJIJIE, Mexico, says:—

'India is destined to be the leading country of the world. But for this she must retain the worth while things she has and not copy the West too slavishly.

'She must keep to her ideals of Ahimsa, Pacifism and Vegetarianism.....

'The truth is that one can be stronger and fitter on a proper vegetarian diet than on one that includes meat. Vegetarian athletes prove this to be true where they live on an adequate diet. Mr. Rose won three gold medals for swimming records at the last Olympic games. Mr. Bill Pickering swims the English Channel in record time. Vegetarian cyclists create records and win many races.

'As a physician I find that a person on a proper vegetarian diet is healthier than one eating meat. His vitality is higher and so he is less prone to disease. He lives longer.

'This is because the end products of meat in the system clog the tissues—some times of the liver, or the kidneys or of the glands. I can prove this by taking a patient who is ill as a consequence of clogging his body in this way, and by advising a diet—a very light one of may be just a little fruit—watch the return of health as the system is cleared of the toxins set up by eating meat.

'The trouble with many vegetarians in India is that they do not include enough of the non-starchy vegetables or fruits in their food. They eat devitalised and refined foods. We should eat only foods which contain their full vitamin and mineral value.

'Mentally, intellectually and spiritually the effect of a vegetarian diet is benign. India has some of the greatest literature in the world, not merely polished language but

of highest artistic and spiritual quality. And the authors were all vegetarians!

'In the West our finest authors also are vegetarians. I meant the immortals: Emerson, Shelley, Milton, Shaw, Shakespeare, Wordsworth, Wagner, Albert Schweitzer and so on.

'I do hope that India will absorb these facts so that her destiny will be fulfilled.....

'We cannot make animals suffer in place of ourselves for not living right. We suffer more, subjectively, psychologically and spiritually by inflicting on them the tortures of the vivisection laboratory. And all in my view formed from experience, unnecessary.

'India could well copy the land of my adoption, Mexico, at once. We allow no vivisection of animals in medical schools. I do wish you would pass a law in India to similar effect without any further delay.'

Food does not mean only that which is eaten. We should also learn to see only the good, hear only the good, speak and think of only the good. This selective feeding of the senses will develop *Sattvic* (pure) nature and bring about the calming of the mind leading to equanimity or Self-realization. Whereas vegetarian diet tends to render mind calm and poised, meat diet produces mental agitation and excitement. Moreover, any human heart is bound to shudder at the very sight of the brutal process of killing an animal. In any case, therefore, meat diet should be discarded in sheer self-interest. One on the way toward the development of true spirituality should never compromise with one's principles, but should be as hard as steel where principles are at stake.

As explained by Swami Sivanand in his article 'The Harm In Eating Meat':—

"Non-vegetarianism is objected to because it entails the slaughtering of innocent creatures. It may be objected to due to the baneful effects flesh-eating has upon the growth and development of the eater's personality.....

"Food sustains life. Every man grows through the food he consumes. Food is matter. Three Gunas, *Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*, conducive to purity, disharmony and inertia, respectively prevail in varying ratio in all matter. Our ancients have made a very deep and a very minute analytical study of this question, and have carefully classified types of matter according to these three qualities. As mentioned already, man grows through food. Whatever is the quality of the food it works itself into the nature of the consumer. Even the mind of man is fashioned out of the subtle portion of the food which he consumes. Now, animals are creatures in a very low stage of evolution. Their inherent qualities are beastliness. The entire material that goes to make up their gross fleshy body is pervaded by this bestial quality. Every atom of physical matter and each minute cell in that body has this quality of grossness and beastliness. The effect of consuming fleshy food is therefore quite clear. The inward culture and evolution of the individual depends upon the extent to which he is able to shed his grossness and is able to free himself from *Rajas* and *Tamas* and attain to *Sattva*. Therefore the food that tends to render his nature gross and sub-human is an enemy of his real growth. It retards his progress towards perfection. It is a bar to the most important attainment in human life. Hence non-vegetarian food is undesirable and deserves to be avoided."

A truly spiritual life is a life of at-one-ment with God. Yoga is the science of *better* life in tune with the Infinite Spirit which is the foundation of purity, freedom, peace, power, knowledge and bliss. It leads to Self-realisation, which means the complete transcendence of physical awareness and merger of one's consciousness with the Infinite Divinity.

A Yogi or truly religious man is not interested in the formalities of rites, rituals, ceremonies, sacrifices, etc. These outward forms of religion may inspire feelings of awe, respect and love for higher spiritual things, and this may be helpful to a certain extent, but they lose their relevancy beyond a certain point, and are a mere outer husk of spiritual life. True religion is an enobling experience. It unifies, harmonises,

uplifts and elevates. Anything demoralising or dehumanizing is irreligious.

Yoga is a binding force that keeps us united with the divine in us, the inner fountain of Peace and Bliss. By this union the mind is clarified, the heart is elevated, and the soul of man evolves through higher planes to enjoy the delight of God-union, and psychic powers are generated. But this spiritualism is to be distinguished from spiritism: the miracle-mongering by means of mesmerism or hypnotism or spirit-communication, e.g., the phenomena of table-tilting, planchette, automatic writing, etc., which are all on the lower vital plane, that of the astral or desire body. We must distinguish the supra-conscious from the sub-conscious. Whereas the sub-conscious is the field for most psycho-analytic investigation; it is related to the past; it is the repository of memory, both conscious and unconscious; and it has to do with man's personality and with his mental, emotional and instinctive life; the supra-conscious lies in the future; it is impersonal; and while it registers group and human need it is quite indifferent to the call of personal self-interest.

To act in a spirit of dedication is Karma Yoga. To love God in all is Bhakti Yoga. To be aware of the unique Self in all is Jnana Yoga. To live a pure life, in thought, word and deed, and in all parts of the being is called Yoga of Purity or Yoga-Vedanta. Purity brings Peace. It electrifies the entire being with pure consciousness of the Almighty Grace. A serene peace, a deep satisfaction, an indifference to praise and blame, weal or woe, a mystic exaltation of life is felt when we realise this Purity. Of all the moral discipline and ethics leading one upto the land of Peace and Bliss, the one supreme virtue of virtues, which is the mother of peace, poise and integration, is Purity, chastity, *Brahmcharya* or sex-sublimation. Our first birth is from sex-union; our second birth must be God-union when sex is obliterated or sublimated.

"Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God."

Peace and Bliss can be found only in the Kingdom of God, which means purity of life, based on the moral absolutes which lead us to the vision of the Infinite, that is redemption, *Mukti*,

Nirvana, all in one. We should learn to generate powerful, sincere, noble and righteous thoughts. That will change the mentality of mankind and herald a new era of peace, plenty and prosperity.

The Book of Psalms defines the Biblical doctrine of Righteousness as follows:—

"He that walketh uprightly and worketh righteousness and speaketh the truth in his heart; he that back-biteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbour; he that putteth not out his money to usury, nor taketh reward against the innocent."

(Psalms 15 : 2-5)

"And he shall judge the world in righteousness; he shall minister judgment to the people in uprightness."

(Psalms 9 : 8)

"For the word of the Lord is right, and all His works are Love in truth. He loveth righteousness and judgment: the earth is full of the goodness of the Lord."

(Psalms 33 : 4, 5)

According to the prophet Hosea, righteousness is more important than religious worship: "For I desired mercy and not sacrifice, and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings."

Says Lord Krishna in 'The Bhagavad Gita':—

'O Arjuna, four classes of doers of good acts worship me, namely, he who is distressed, he who seeks after knowledge, he who wants wealth, and he who is possessed of knowledge.' (VII/16).

'Amongst these (four classes of men) he, who is the possessor of knowledge, being devoted, and having faith on only the One, is considered to be superior to the rest. For to a man of (true) knowledge, I am dear above everything and he is dear to Me. (VII/17).

'All these four classes of men are noble, but, a man, who is possessed of knowledge, is considered by Me as My own Self. For he, with his self devoted to abstraction, has taken

Me to be the goal than which there is nothing higher.' (VII/18).

'The man of knowledge reaches Me at the end of many lives, believing that Vasudeva is all this (everything and all things of the universe). But such a high-souled man is exceedingly rare.' (VII/19).

'One only among thousands of men tries to get perfection; and even among those that are assiduous and have achieved perfection, only very few know Me truly.' (VII/3).

At one end we are attracted by the downward pull of sensual pleasures or so-called Materialism: all the ignorance that inert matter represents; at the other end we are being pulled up by the flashes of inspiration and the qualms of conscience that we get from a Higher Mind, *Para-Buddhi*, which is above the intellectual plane on which our mind normally functions. The call of Religion is to divinise human nature so that man can realize divinity, and the Bliss of Brahman, and be one with the Father, the One Reality, which is the goal and purpose of existence. As St. Paul says: "The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second is the Lord from the Heaven."

As observed by Nicholas Murray Butler in his address delivered on June 6, 1939, at the 185th Commencement of Columbia University on the '*Everlasting Conflict*':

"There is only one really fundamental problem which faces human kind..... That problem exists because of the conflict between the Spirit of man and the animal from which he has sprung and from which he is trying to free himself....."

"That there is a moral order means that moral principle and moral ideals should take precedence of all else, and that there is progress means that man has had a certain measure of success in putting moral principle and moral ideals ahead of selfishness and gain-seeking as motives to conduct..

... "It is some 25 centuries since Moses came down from Mount Sinai bearing the Ten Commandments, of which the

Sixth was: "*Thou shalt not kill.*" It is twenty centuries since Jesus Christ uttered the maxim, "*Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.*" The Christian religion which has supposedly inspired and guided so much of Western civilisation, places these two principles among its foundation stones. They have also been accepted by the Jewish world and by the Moslem world as well. Therefore, they may claim the adherence in one form or another of a vast majority of the populations in the countries of Europe and America. What sign do these populations give of carrying into the practice of life and of Government these fundamental principles to which they so glibly and so constantly profess adherence? No, the gap between the profession and practice is wide indeed, and until it is bridged there can be no improvement in human affairs. Just so long as self-seeking, supported by threats of force, controls the policies of men within nations and nations in their dealings with each other, just so long will the animal in man prevail over higher human nature."

Man is his mind. It is the mind that makes and unmakes us. As a man thinketh in his heart, so he becomes. Man is a strange compound of two cross breeds, the animal and the divine. Both these two forces are ever at tug-of-war with each other. "Man," as Byron said, "is half dust and half deity, unfit alike to sink or soar." You cannot serve both God and Mammon at the same time.

The conditions of life seen all around us are such as tend to debase and brutalize human nature, and make us more and more materialistic in our outlook. As Dryden says,

*".....virtues in distress and vice in triumph
Make atheists of mankind."*

Our knowledge of material sciences also teaches us that because animals and men have in the past made their advance through conflict, the future concept of progress should be based on biological theories of life. All religions, on the contrary, teach us that that view is wrong. They teach us that there is a law of divine justice, which, as a Grecian saying goes,

*'Just, though mysterious, leads us on unerring
Through ways unmark'd from guilt to punishment.'*

Vedanta explains in a scientific way how man is the architect of his own fortune as well as his own executioner: his own saviour and his own destroyer; that he need not accuse Heaven and the gods, Fates and Providence, of the apparent injustice that reigns in the midst of humanity; and how the error is caused by 'Maya' or delusion and how all of us are victims of 'Maya'. Our conscience revolts against the materialistic concept of progress. It revolts because the soul within us is potentially divine. On the one hand, we are painfully conscious of the limitations of our body and mind, on the other we find a will-power within us, and think we can direct our will everywhere. At one time we feel we are free, at another time we feel we are not free. Vedanta teaches us that the soul within us is free, and that it is its freedom that proclaims itself every moment that we are free, whereas our intelligence, like our body is not free, as also our will-power.

As Christ says: "*And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.*" (St. John, 8/32).

As a Sufi saint Khuddoosi Faqir says:

गुप्त खुद से फ़क़ीरे दर फ़नाओ दरवका ।
खुद बख़ुद आज़ाद बूदी खुद ग़िरफ़्तार आमदीद ॥

"Both in life and death you yourself are free as well as in bondage."

Or, as poet Ghalib says:—

न था मैं तो खुदा था, कुछे न होता तो खुदा था ।
डबाया मुझको होने ने, न होता मैं तो क्या होता ॥

"When I did not exist, I was God.
And I would have been God if I had not come into being.
My descent was due to my coming into being.
What would I have been if I had not come into being?"

What we get out of life depends largely on our approach to it and our view-point. All religions teach:

*'Do you ask for kindness, be kind,
Do you ask for truth, be true,*

*Whatever you give of yourself you find,
The world is a reflex of you.'*

To a materialist it is like a pendulum oscillating between a so-called heaven and hell of his conception, but to a spiritualist who has realised unity behind diversity it is a source of eternal joy. As observed by Sri Ramana Maharshi: "The world is all right as it is; it is we that are to blame, because of our own mistaken way of thinking; what we have to do is to trace the initial error that is at the back of our minds and pluck it out; then it will be all right."

देह धरे का कष्ट है सब काहू को होय ।

ज्ञानी काटे ज्ञान से, मूर्ख काटे रोय ॥

"Suffering is the common lot of everybody who has got into a physical body. The wise get through it with the help of *Gyan* (True Knowledge), that is, by a philosophical approach, whereas others do it wailing and weeping."

"As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." And so also becomes his environment, that is the law. Just as by adopting a materialistic outlook we make a hell of our lives, by cultivating a Heavenly consciousness we find ourselves living in a Heavenly environment. That is why Lord Jesus preached: "Change your minds and thinking, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand, or nigh you."

Vedanta teaches that God, the Master of Evolution, is ever attracting everybody toward Himself with His infinite love, but by his ignorance man shuts out His light and guidance, and then he tumbles down as any one opposing or ignoring the law of gravitation would tumble down, and we call it punishment. All the punishment that man gets in life is due to shocks given to him by a Providence who wants to be better understood and appreciated.

Sri Ramakrishna Paramhansa used to say, "God is like a magnet and man a piece of iron, which is being constantly drawn towards the great Magnet. But like mud that covers the iron, sins prevent man's adherence to the Magnet, and all that is therefore needed is to free the iron of its mud."

Lord Buddha taught: To save yourself from the suffering

resulting from ignorance of the Real nature of your being and the world, prepare yourself for Enlightenment."

According to Vedanta, one should live for a hundred years. The art of living is the greatest of all arts. One should live in the 'Now', which is the only real moment of life. Life, according to an Arabic proverb, is composed of two parts: that which is past—a dream; and that which is to come—a wish. The problem is not survival and continuity after death, but to know how to live fully in the present. *Moksha* or *Nirvana* must be achieved in the present life. Become a *Jivanmukta* (free while living). Birth in a physical body is the necessary price for the rapid evolution that is possible here on earth. It is, therefore, a privilege to be born in this earth. As observed by John Donne, an English divine (1572-1631):

"I count all that part of my life lost which I spent not in communion with God, or in doing good."

When we meet suffering rightly we experience that the most appalling void, the most burning bitterness suddenly become an infinite fulness and ecstasy.

Some of the eternal Truths taught by Vedanta find their echo in the following quotations from great writers and thinkers of all ages:—

"All are but parts of one stupendous Whole, whose body Nature is and God the soul."

Alexander Pope

"Nature is too thin a screen; the glory of the Omnipresent God bursts through everywhere."

Emerson

"God is a circle whose centre is everywhere, and its circumference nowhere."

Empedocles

[Greek philosopher (490-430 B. C.)]

"The end of life is to be like God, and the soul following God will be like Him."

Socrates

"The Word of God became man, in order that thou also mayest learn from man, how man becomes God."

Clement of Alexandria

"To eternity itself there is no other handle than the present moment."

"Let any man examine his thoughts, and he will find them ever occupied with the past or the future. We scarcely think at all of the present; or if we do, it is only to borrow the light which it gives for regulating the future. The present is never our object; the past and the present we use as means; the future only is our end. Thus, we never live, we only hope to live."

Blaise Pascal

[French philosopher (1623-62)]

"Each moment, as it passes, is the meeting place of two eternities. What I most value next to eternity, is time."

Madam Swetchine

[Russian mystic (1782-1857)]

"Try to be happy in the present moment and put not off being so to a time to come; as though that time should be of another make from this, which is already come, and is ours."

Thomas Fuller

[English divine (1608-61)]

"Virtue is its own reward, and brings with it the highest and truest pleasures; but if we cultivate it only for pleasures' sake, we are selfish, not religious, and will never gain the pleasure, because we can never have the virtue."

Francis W. Newman

[English author (1805-97)]

"To be able under all circumstances to practise five things constitutes perfect virtue; these five are gravity, generosity of soul, sincerity, earnestness, and kindness."

Confucius

One of the Upanishads (*Brihadaranyaka*) says:

"This universe, before it was created, existed as Brahman. Brahman created out of himself priests, warriors, tradesmen, and servants, among both gods and men.

"Then He created the most excellent Law. There is nothing higher than the Law. The Law is the truth. Therefore it is said that if a man speak the truth he declares the Law, and if he declare the Law he speaks the truth. The Law and the truth are one."

According to Vedanta, every living being is Brahman. According to the Buddha, every human being contains the possibility of *arhatship* or Buddhahood; and *Nirvana*, which is freedom from subjection to time, can be achieved in this life.

'Be perfect as your father which is in heaven,' said the Christ.

All religions teach that we should carry in our heart the consciousness that we are part of God. As Pope said, "All are parts of one stupendous whole." Knowing this, one cannot quarrel, cannot hate, cannot condemn anybody. That is exactly what all religions teach. Unless we incorporate this idea of religion with science there is little hope of survival of this civilisation which is getting intoxicated every day with its scientific achievements. Indeed, there can never be universal Peace without individual Peace, which comes from Self-realisation.

Vedic theism presupposes the existence of *Satyam* (Truth) and *Ritam* (Eternal Order) which also includes *Dharma*, laying down the Highest Moral Code for man. The Rg. Veda says, '*As Satyam upholds the earth, so does Ritam uphold the heavens.*' (Rg. X. 88. 1) The Veda further lays down that *Ritam*, eternal moral order, should guide all attempts at growing rich, and to the man who lives according to Law the earth is full of sweetness and becomes a veritable heaven. (Rg. 31.2 & 1.90) Again, says the Veda: "*Truth, Eternal Order that is great and stern, consecration, austerity, prayer and ritual—these uphold the earth.*" (Ath. XII. 1.1) Likewise, Confucius taught: 'Our

moral being is the great reality (lit. 'the great root') of all existence, and the moral order is the universal law of the world. The highest good was the proper maintenance of a balanced system of human relationship."

Hence, *Dharma* is that transcendental law above all man-made laws, which no man can dare defy, and to which all man-made laws must conform. It belongs to the category of transcendental laws, such as, the natural laws of evolution, or what we call the laws of Karma or divine justice. *Dharma* is, broadly speaking, a code of Highest action laying down the functions and duties for the various orders, groups and institutions of mankind.

Dharma is defined as follows in Mahabharata, Shanti-Parva:—

*"That which binds fast all beings, each to each,
With bonds of rights-and-duties; binding these
Also together, in unfailing law
Of action and reactions, whence arises
Reward for good, Punishment for ill,
And thus preserves mankind—Dharma is that."*

The whole creation, gods and men, Heavens and earth are all alike bound by *Dharma* and Karma. *Dharma* is the principle of Righteousness: the moral Code for the conduct of right living. It is the eternal law of life—the Cosmic legislator. It embraces 'What is Truth, what is Right, what is Good, and what is just.' It fulfils the purpose of spiritual evolution through the instrumentality of the Law of Karma, its Cosmic executor. If we could discern the nature of the higher laws of *Dharma* and Karma, and its conviction could permeate our general understanding, much of human suffering could be avoided.

Derived from the Sanskrit root '*Dhri*' (to hold) *Dharma* stands for that which holds up the existence of a thing, that is to say, the essential nature or the chief characteristics of a thing by which it is known. For example, the characteristic or essential nature of fire is to burn. In the same way, man has also an essential nature that upholds his existence as

something distinct from the rest of creation. And this must be *Dharma* of man, *manav Dharma*. Now what is the essential nature of man? Our religions teach that it is the power of becoming divine that makes out man from all other beings. They further teach that divinity is already within us, that we are divine by nature, but divinity lies deep in our being, and we do not perceive it so long as our unclean mind stands in the way. Just as light cannot be seen through a smoky chimney, the impurities of our mind, e.g., greed, anger, hatred, envy, pride, selfishness and lust obscure the divinity within us. So long as these sway our mind, we make mistakes almost at every step of our life, and very often behave like brutes; our imperfection fills the cup of misery and brings untold sufferings upon us. Therefore, the power of becoming divine must be *Dharma* of man.

But *Dharma* for an individual cannot be different from *Dharma* for man as a social being. No civilisation can survive for long which is not based on eternal principles of '*Dharma*' or what we call the verities of existence like Truth and Justice, or our conception of the glory of man or God. Truth or '*Sa'yam*' alone survives through the Ages, therefore Vedanta teaches: 'Truth alone triumphs, never falsehood.' Indeed, Truth is as everlasting as the Almighty potency of the Sustainer-of-all-that-is, and must therefore outlive all the falsehoods. A civilisation based on falsehood, trickery, cheating, or force can never last long. It has its seeds of destruction within itself. The true test by which we may judge a civilisation or Constitution or an economic system is how long it holds the field, and continues to inspire people and hold them together.

Very important though bread is, man after all does not live by bread alone. The best of an earthly paradise based on a mechanical civilisation cannot remain a paradise for long if human nature is allowed to be debased or brutalised. In the conflict that goes on within us between the animal man and the spiritual, institutions and ideas have value and relevance only in relation to their capacities to humanise the brute in man, and divinise man. Who can deny that there is a constant conflict going on between ideality and practicability, and

the measure of humanity lies in the extent to which we can assert the former principle over the latter? Men when swayed by higher ideals become capable of putting in super-human effort and become well-nigh super-men, just as love of riotous luxury makes them pampered and demoniacal in their materialistic pursuits. Indeed, the real sources of happiness lie within man, viz., in his ability to assert the principle of renunciation and distribution rather than of appropriation, in his power to rise equal to the occasions demanding highest kinds of heroic self-sacrifice for the service of one's fellow-men. Even without accomplishing a general rise in the standard of living certain civilised communities of men imbued with noble ideals have lived far happier lives than other communities having an abundance of material wealth but possessing low aims and sordid motives. 'Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey; where wealth accumulates and men decay.'

A social order to be stable must be based on the sure foundations of the law which governs all relationships. Such a law is called *Dharma* in ancient Indian polity. It is the expression in terms of behaviour and conduct of the universal law of harmony, according to which a man who lives for himself misses his happiness, and he can only be happy when he lives for the whole human family, even all the living creatures, and when the motto of his life is: 'The entire world is one family.' *Dharma* is looked upon as the end, and the State only a means towards it.

The great Socialist, Ferdinand Lassale, dreamt that 'We must widen our notion of the State so as to believe that the State is the institution in which the whole virtue of humanity should be realized.' But even Scientific Socialism, if it is backed by a materialist philosophy, will not succeed in creating a lasting earthly paradise. Even if it may succeed in overcoming by its superior force all opposition from outside, it will disrupt under a struggle for power from inside.

For the eternal Cosmic Law of Moral Order is: 'Only good endures and multiplies. Evil, if it multiplies will ultimately destroy itself.' There is no doubt that one time philosophical concept that is accepted by mankind ultimately influences the world more than a hundred victories on the battle field.

As observed by Carlyle: "It seems to me a great truth, that human things cannot stand on selfishness, mechanical utilities, economics, and law Courts; that if there be not a religious element in the relations of men, such relations are miserable, and doomed to ruin." Or, as Aristotle says, "It is better for a city to be governed by a good man than even by good laws." Or, as an American clergyman, G. Spring says, "The protestant principle, that 'God alone is Lord of the conscience,' has done more to give the mind power, and to strike off its chains, than any principle of mere secular policy in the most perfect 'Bill of Rights.'"

The truth of the matter is that a soul-less democracy, not inspired by any high ideal of sacrifice, or glory of God or man, and devoid of all idealistic touches, will give us very similar results whether it is based on Western utilitarianism or the philosophy of dialectical materialism. The lesson will have to be learnt, sooner or later, that the real solution lies in evolving a 'spiritual democracy', or say 'Christian Socialism,' or Socialism with a spiritual bias, or what Mahatma Gandhi called 'Ram Rajya' or 'Dharma Rajya' or the Rule of Righteousness. Then we will notice the beauty of the word 'Dharma' or 'Duty'. As observed by a French friar, J. B. Lacordaire: 'Duty is the greatest of ideas, because it implies the idea of God, of the soul, of liberty, of responsibility, of immortality.' Or, as an American lawyer, John Foster says: "It is wonderful what strength and boldness of purpose and energy will come from the feeling that we are in the way of duty."

If every one of us were to think of our duties only and forget our rights, we shall have established upon earth *Dharma-Rajya* or Rule of Righteousness. Then, and not till then, we shall find, as day follows night, that the earth will be overflowing with milk and honey, and the Millennium will dawn upon us transforming our earthly existence into a veritable paradise.

What '*Dharma*' stands for may be seen from the following Sanskrit texts:—

धर्मेण रक्षते पृथ्वी धर्मेण रक्षते जगत् ।
धर्मेण रक्षते विश्वं धर्मो रक्षति रक्षितः ॥

न हि धर्मं विना सत्यं न सत्यं धर्मं विच्युतम् ।
न हि ईशो विना धर्मं अधर्मश्च विनाशकृत् ॥

"The Earth is upheld in its place by *Dharma*, and so is the universe, and the whole creation. *Dharma* protects him who protects his *Dharma*. There is no *Dharma* without Truth, no truth without *Dharma*; no *Dharma* without God and no God without *Dharma*. *Adharma* is the sole destroyer of the universe."

सत्यं विना न धर्मः स्यात् अधर्मो नानृतं विना ।
सत्याश्रितं सदा पुण्यं पापं मिथ्याश्रितं सदा ॥

"There is no *Dharma* without Truth and no *Adharma* without falsehood. The refuge of Virtue is Truth, of sin, falsehood."

धर्मेण हन्यते व्याधि, धर्मेण हन्यतेगृहाः ।
धर्मेण हन्यते शत्रु, यतो धर्मस्ततो जयः ॥

"*Dharma* destroys disease, evil stars and enemies, and victory follows wherever there is *Dharma*."

अन्यान्योपाजितं द्रव्यं दशवर्षाणि तिष्ठति ।
प्राप्ते च द्वादश वर्षे समूलं च विनश्यति ॥

"Money earned through *Adharma* (shady means) stays for ten years, but on completion of twelve years it is lost root and branch with interest."

अधर्माज्जित द्रव्येण यत् करोति शुभं नरः ।
विपरीतं भवेत्तत् फलं काले न संशयः ॥

"Whatever good a man does with wealth earned by *Adharma* has a reverse effect in the end, there is no doubt about it."

धर्मेण एधते लोकः अधर्मः प्रलयं करः ।
धर्मं बुद्धिः शुभानित्या धर्मो रक्षति रक्षितः ॥

सुख-श्री-मञ्जलाणाश्च धर्मः एकोहिं कारणम् ।
अधर्मस्य फलं दुःखं सुखं शान्तिं कदापि न ॥

"*Dharma* is the cause of prosperity and *Adharma* of utter ruin. The intelligence that leads a man to pursue the path of *Dharma* constantly and without flinching is alone good; *Dharma* protects him who protects his own *Dharma*. *Dharma* is the one and only cause of happiness, prosperity and all that is good, both in this

world as well as in the next. The fruit of *Adharma* is misery, and never happiness and peace”

विद्या ददाति विनयं,
विनयाद्याति पात्रतां ।
पात्रत्वात् धनं आप्नोति,
धनाति धर्मं ततः सुखं ॥

“Learning gives one humility. Humility begets deservedness. Deservedness gives wealth. From wealth comes *Dharma*, and only after that comes Happiness.”

अधर्मस्य फलं दुःखं सुखं शान्तिः कदापि न ।
समृद्धि कारणं धर्मो ह्यधर्मश्च क्षयावहः ॥

“*Adharma* always leads to misery, never to peace and happiness. By *Dharma* does the world prosper. By *Adharma* does it go to ruin.”

अधर्मात् सुखमापातं मोहं नाशकरं नृणाम् ।
धर्मादेव सुखं शश्वत् बुद्धि प्रसादनं तथा ॥

“Fleeting and momentary success may attend *Adharma* only to overwhelm the sinner in ruin through wrong attachment. Permanent success comes from *Dharma* alone. It alone brightens up the intellect and leads to true vision.”

इच्छानुकूलं यद् वाक्यं धर्मा धर्मो विविजितम् ।
अनृतं तद्धि विज्ञेयं सर्वं श्रेयो विधातनम् ॥

“That word which is dictated by desire, regardless of *Dharma* and *Adharma* is called falsehood and annihilates good altogether.”

यथार्थकथनं यच्च सर्वं लोक सुखप्रदम् ।
तत् सत्यमिति विज्ञेयं न सत्यं यद्विपर्ययेम् ॥

“That is called *Truth* which is true to the letter and conduces to the real good of humanity. Truth is not truth if it does not possess both these qualities. Therefore a true word is false, if it is toned down to meet the requirements of sin, and a compromise not for the real good of humanity is a false compromise.”

सत्यमेव परं ब्रह्म सत्यरूपो जनाह्वनः ।
न हि सत्यात् परो धर्मो नानृतात् पातकं परम् ॥

“Truth is *Brahma* and God Himself. Truth is the highest virtue and untruth is the greatest sin.”

वाचो विचलिता यस्य सुकृतं तेन हारितम् ।
मेदिनी तस्य पापेन कम्पते च मुहुर्मुहुः ॥

"His virtue vanishes who fails to keep his word. The sin of a broken word makes the Earth tremble again and again."

सत्यं परं ब्रह्म विज्ञानरूपम् ।
सत्यं हि सृष्टिस्थिति लीन कर्त्त॑ ॥
सत्यं हि साम्यं किल वस्तु धर्मः ।
सत्यं शरण्यं शरणं प्रपद्यते ॥

"Truth is 'Brahma' and wisdom supreme. Truth creates, sustains and destroys the universé. Truth is equality and quality of things. Truth is the only refuge from trouble and tribulations. To truth, do I surrender myself absolutely."

IV. FUNDAMENTALS OF RAM RAJYA OR SPIRITUAL DEMOCRACY

"Never forget the glory of Human Nature. We are the greatest Gods. Christs and Buddhas are but waves on the boundless ocean which I am !"

—Vivekananda.

As the verities of existence taught by all great religions of the world have stood the test of time, we will have to look up to them for light and guidance while laying the foundations of a successful democracy, even though the past records of theocratic States show that rot sets in when the inspiration of the Masters and Prophets has departed. Once we postulate the existence of *Ritam*, or an eternal moral order or a Law of Righteousness operating through nature, e.g., the laws of evolution, or Karma, or of divine justice, they being eternal and transcendental like the law of gravitation, the best thing that we can do is to conform our human laws to them, so as to allow the natural to express itself as freely and thoroughly as possible through the man-made laws and institutions. In any case, no contractual obligations or rights of suffrage or powers of monopoly should be pitched against the inexorable natural laws of divine justice or against the blinding force of all-conquering Truth—the Truth, for instance, that all life is one, and that there is a fundamental unity behind diversity, and as such it is only too true that the retribution is in the act itself. It, therefore, follows, as night follows day, that without feeling for oneness of life, and thus securing co-operation to that end—feeling equally for the lowest human being of the meanest race as well as for the best and the highest—no civilisation could last for long, for the bonds that unite human nature are stronger than the strongest steel-plate.

Our Civilisation, if it is to endure, must be based on the tripod of Truth, Non-violence and Yoga. Lord Tennyson wrote :

*"Self-reverence, Self-knowledge and self-control—
These three alone lead life to Sovereign Power.
Yet not for power,
Power of herself would come uncalled for."*

The *Dhammapadattha-katha* records that Lord Buddha directed his attention to the problem of good government, as a country to be happy must have a just government. How a just government could be realized is explained by the Buddha in his teaching of the "Ten Duties of the King" (*dasa raja dhamma*), as given in the *Jataka* text: (quoted from 'What the Buddha taught' by Ven. Dr. W. Rahula)

'The first of the 'Ten Duties of the King' is liberality, generosity, charity (*dana*). The ruler should not have craving and attachment to wealth and property, but should give it away for the welfare of the people.

'Second: A high moral character (*sila*). He should not destroy life, cheat, steal and exploit others, commit adultery, utter falsehood, and take intoxicating drinks. That is, he must at least observe the Five Precepts of the layman.

'Third: Sacrificing every thing for the good of the people (*pariceaga*), he must be prepared to give up all personal comfort, name and fame, and even his life, in the interest of the people.

'Fourth: Honesty and integrity (*ajjava*): He must be free from fear or favour in the discharge of his duties, must be sincere in his intentions, and must not deceive the public.

'Fifth: Kindness and gentleness (*maddava*). He must possess a genial temperament.

'Sixth: Austerity in habits (*tapas*). He must lead a simple life, and should not indulge in a life of luxury. He must have self-control.

'Seventh: Freedom from hatred, ill-will, enmity (*akko-dha*). He should bear no grudge against anybody.

'Eight: Non-violence (*avihimsa*), which means not only that he should harm nobody, but also that he should

try to promote peace by avoiding and preventing war, and every thing which involves violence and destruction of life.

'*Ninth*: Patience, forbearance, tolerance, understanding (*khanti*). He must be able to bear hardships, difficulties and insults without losing his temper.

'*Tenth* : Non-opposition, non-obstruction (*avirodha*), that is to say that he should not oppose the will of the people, should not obstruct any measures that are conducive to the welfare of the people. In other words he should rule in harmony with his people.'

The learned author, Ven. Dr. W. Rahula, observes :

"If a country is ruled by men endowed with such qualities, it is needless to say that that country must be happy. But this was not a utopia, for there were kings in the past like Asoka of India who had established kingdoms based on these ideas."

The human family surely cannot survive, much less flourish, in this age of the 'atom bomb' with the law of the jungle or a materialist philosophy ruling our international affairs. It is, therefore, for the leaders and rulers of mankind to lay the foundations of international law as well as of human society upon some eternal principles of *Dharma*, which alone can hold the world together, and save humanity from destruction and annihilation. They should further practice in their lives the highest ideals of service and sacrifice and set a living example to erring humanity.

The ancient Indo-Aryan law givers recognised that a policy based on a study of human psychology ought to provide a Code of conduct for different types of people. Human nature, according to them, complex as it is, is the result of the blending of three *Gunas* or qualities: (i) '*Sattwik*' or intelligent, serene, peace-loving and contemplative; (ii) '*Rajsik*' or active nature; and (iii) '*Tamsik*' or dull and slothful and pleasure-loving nature. And they classified mankind into four broad divisions.

According to Shi Samkara's commentary, the division of

society into four groups was based on psychology thus: (i) Brahmins are those persons in whom 'Sattwa' predominates over 'Rajas' and the latter over 'Tamas'; (ii) Kshatriyas are those, in whom 'Rajas' predominates over 'Sattwa', and the latter over 'Tamas'; (iii) Vaishyas are those in whom 'Rajas' predominates over 'Tamas' and the latter over 'Sattwa'; and (iv) Sudras are those in whom 'Tamas' predominates over 'Rajas', and the latter over 'Sattwa'. In mathematical terms where A, B and C represent the three *Gunas* or qualities: (i) *Sattwik*, (ii) *Rajsik*, and (iii) *Tamsik*, the four divisions of society will be: (I) ABC, (II) BAC, (III) BCA and (IV) CBA.

"Intelligence, sacrifice, disinterested service are the characteristics of the Brahmins. Valour, chivalry, forgiveness, ability to rule are the characteristics of the Kshatriyas. Trade, co-operation, agriculture and distribution of wealth are the characteristics of Vaishyas. Ungrudging service is the characteristic of the Sudras."

Originally the division was functional and not hereditary. Says Lord Krishna in the '*Bhagavad-Gita*' :—

चातुर्वर्ण्यं मया सृष्टं गुण कर्म विभागशः । (४/१३)

"Four *Varanas* were brought into being by Me, according to disposition (characteristics) and according to Karma." (IV/13)

Human society must of necessity comprise of different types of people in different stages of evolution of human nature. While at one extreme, there are people—generally belonging to the possessing class—who abhor the idea of equality in economic goods in their self-interest as they conceive it, there are on the other extreme a few ascetic type of people who would reject even the general equality in economic comforts, as their aim is to sacrifice even their minimum of comforts in favour of others, and who would like to live like the lowliest of the low, having cherished the ideals of sacrifice and self-abnegation, of meekness and humility with a diametrically opposite notion of self-interest.

The true Brahmin belonging to the first category is an intensely religious person who aims at reforming human

nature first and leaves the reform of human institutions and system of government to take care of itself; one who believes in setting an example in living a dedicated life devoted to acts of service and sacrifice; in minimizing his material physical wants and in devoting himself to Self-development and the cause of knowledge and education for its own sake; one who will lay implicit faith in thought, word and deed in the creed of non-violence; who will suffer meekly but strike not; one who takes the vow of poverty and lives on charity, and does not save for the morrow. He represents the personality group called a Brahmin, one who seeks to realize Brahman or the Over-soul—the highest efflorescence of man. If all men could become Brahmins or good Christians, the following observations of Bryce in his work '*Modern Democracies*' (Vol. I, P. 97) under the heading 'Democracy and Religion' would apply:—

"If the aim of Socialism and Communism be defined as being the establishment of a greater equality of economic conditions and the extinction of suffering due to poverty, these are ends which Christianity also seeks. But the means by which it would attain those ends are different from those which any political party has advocated.... Communist politicians propose to carry out their programmes by law, i. e., by the compulsive power of the State using physical force. The Gospel contemplates quite other means of bettering human society. It appeals to the sympathy and conscience of the individual, bidding him love his neighbour as himself and, since he is bound to rejoice in his neighbour's happiness equally with his own, to treat his neighbour not as a competitor, but as a partner or a brother, giving to him freely all he needs. In a Christian society regulated by these principles there would be no need for the various organs of State action, for an army, or a navy, or Courts of law, or police, nor would there be any State relief of poverty, because relief would already have been voluntarily effected by private benevolence. Under the conditions of such a society the State would in fact be superfluous, except as an organisation for devising and carrying out a variety of purposes beneficial to all, such as the constructions of

public works and the preservation of public wealth."

But it is nothing but utopian to imagine that all men could be cast in the same mould, and could become good Christians or Brahmins.

The second category is of those individuals who believe in reform through the machinery of law, in the power of the State to enforce the rule of law and of justice, equity and good conscience; those who would make laws to regulate outward human conduct, and caring not for real reform from within; those who organise government and carry their policies and programmes to success in their political application. To the second category belong our legislators and law-givers, the so-called politicians and statesmen as well as our Judges who interpret the law, and all the rest of our State servants, whose duty it is to administer the law. Those belonging to the second class, called the Kshatriya Order, are also expected to subordinate the sordid ambition for wealth to the ambition for power of State authority, and the latter to the ambition for honour due to those who represent the personality group called the Brahmin Class. Every member of this order must be the greatest apostle of the average standard of living or the minimum comfort wage being secured to the lowest unit of labour.

The third Order is that of the wealth-producing or the so-called capitalist class, those who employ labour or carry on their profession or occupations independently, that is, with their own capital. The *Dharma* laid down by Manu, the Indo-Aryan law-giver, for the *Vaishya* or the capitalist class is as follows:—

सर्वां करेष्वावीकारो महा यन्त्रे प्रवर्त्तनम् ।

ग्रात्मार्षं च क्रियारम्भो, नास्तिकां चोपपातकम् ॥

"The starting and working of great machines and factories, and also of mines, etc., by individuals is one of the sins next after the heinous ones."

(Manu, XI, 63, 64, 66)

यज्ञाय सृष्टानि धनानि धात्ता यज्ञाय मृष्टः पुरुषोरक्षिता च ।

तस्मात्सर्वं यज्ञएवोपयोऽयं धनं न कामाय हितं प्रशस्तम् ॥

एतत्स्वार्थेन कौतये धनं धनवतांवर ।
धाता ददाति मर्त्तुभ्यो यज्ञार्थं मितिविद्वितम् ॥

"Manu's Vaishya gathers and holds wealth only for the use of others, not for his own luxury; and if he should start factories, it should be not in the individual but the co-operative spirit, as if it were a State business, not his own."

(Mahabharata, Santi Parva)

The fourth class, that of the labour, occupies the lowest grade in the order of merit as it is dependent on the so-called capitalist class. The distinction lies in respect of what the Roman jurists styled, their character, *sui juris* (independent) and *alieni juris* (dependent on others). According to the spirit of the ancient Hindu polity, greater learning or spiritualism is to be valued in greater honour and not coin, the eternal spiritual law behind it being: 'Those who may show greatest attraction for life on the physical plane as against the intellectual or spiritual must be placed in a more favourable position to satiate their craving, than those on the other two planes.' It is, in fact, just contrary to what we have in the existing society—that the mental labour is valued in coin more highly than the physical, while the coin stands for all the comfortable equipment of the physical life.

According to ancient Indian polity, those who produce wealth are not allowed unrestricted freedom for the ends of private exploitation, and if we are to evolve a polity in keeping with the genius of our ancient civilisation, we should, at one end, have nationalisation of all big industries, as the Socialists want us to do, and, at the other end, the family hearth and home should be enriched by developing the arts of consumption and development of cottage industries.

Also, the idea of a welfare State is to be found fully developed in Kautilya's '*Arth-shastra*' (4th century B.C.). For instance, it contains the injunction:—

"The King shall provide the orphans, the dying, the afflicted and the helpless with maintenance. He shall also provide subsistence to helpless expectant mothers, and also to the children they give birth to."

Hiuen Tsang, during his visit to India (631 A.D.- 644 A.D.) was impressed with the moderation of State demand and absence of vexatious taxes. The sources of revenue comprised 1/6th of land produce and road and river tolls. The royal revenues were divided into four principal parts—for State expenses, salaries of public servants, reward for high intellectual eminence and for charity.

There was, however, not much need of a welfare state in the good old days, as the best social security was provided by the ancient institution of joint family, in which the highest communistic ideals were followed.

As our country is particularly wedded to religion and philosophy, those amongst us who aim at a blind imitation of Soviet Russia with her godless conception of life will have to revise their opinion sooner or later in the light of practical experience of life.

Of the three powers of Wealth, Public Authority, and of Intellect, the last is the highest in the ladder as it represents the highest quality of work of which man is capable provided it is dedicated to the service of mankind. We would have a perfect social organisation when the two powers, that of Brahmin and Kshattriya Orders, were to work in harmony, and independently of the money-power of the Vaishya or the capitalist class, with a view to establish a Welfare State. Says the Yajur Veda :

"Where Brahmin and Kshattriya both move together in concord, that world I shall know as one of bliss, where gods with Angi dwell.

(Y. V. XX. 25)

Says the Rg. Veda :—

"Strengthen the power of knowledge (Brahmin) and strengthen mind, strengthen the ruling power (Kshattriya) and strengthen heroes."

(R. VIII. 35. 16-18)

Thus Brahmin and Kshattriya Order of society would be found to make up between them the religious and political

idealism of Vedic times. This principle underlying the ancient scheme of social organisation may be called the 'Balance of Power Principle.'

In a work by a Dutch Professor, '*In the Shadow of Tomorrow*' by J. Hulzinga, translated by J. H. Hulzinga (*Hal-nemann*), it is laid down that the first fundamental of culture is a balance of material and spiritual values. According to the learned author, such a balance "permits the emergence of a social condition which is appreciated by those living in it as affording more and higher value than the mere gratification of want and desire for power. Those values lie in the domain of the spiritual, the intellectual, the moral and the aesthetic;" whereas in the present age "Every group pursues its own particular conception of weal without integrating it in one all-embracing ideal super-imposed on the various particular desires.... In older times we find such common ideals in the glory of God, however understood, justice, virtue, wisdom. But with abandonment of such conceptions the homogeneity of culture is in jeopardy."

Thus we see that while the Western thinkers and savants are discovering new realms of Truth from our ancient wisdom and the traditional life of the East, we are so taken away by the glamour of scientific advancement in the West as to blindly adopt the Western way of life. It is, indeed, for our ancient country to take the lead in laying the foundations of 'Ideal Democracy' which has been defined by Bryce as 'a community in which the sense of public duty and an altruistic spirit fill the minds and direct the will of the large majority of the citizen, so that 'Average citizen' stands on the level of him whom we sometimes meet and describe as the 'model citizen.'

It may be a mere platitude to say, but it nevertheless remains the truth that if you want good laws and regulations you should reform your legislature first. If your legislators are derived from a particular class, or they are "sold up" to the so-called capitalist or the possessing class, how then can you expect good and just laws in the interest of suffering humanity, the so-called hewers of wood and drawers of water? On the contrary, if our legislatures were to be

composed of the wisest and the noblest of the race—the elite and the chosen ones, whom the world calls its savants and prophets, or those recognised as experts in the various sciences and branches of learning, such legislators will certainly be able to find some solution or the other to cure the evils of the present-day industrialism. According to Plato, neither cities nor States nor individuals will ever attain perfection until the small class of philosophers are providentially compelled to take care of the State, or until Kings are divinely inspired with a true love of true philosophy.

The real problem is not a choice between Socialism or Communism or some other "ism", but it is how to obtain the ideal legislature. Who will deny in theory at least that the legislators of the country must be selfless people, whose main qualification must lie in the height of their sacrifice and not their property acquisitions?

The stock argument that at least certain representation of the self-complacent, indolent and ease-loving type of men belonging to the pampered propertied class is absolutely essential to lend stability to our legislatures, is just the argument which spells the failure of so-called democratic form of government as we have known so far. The true democracy has yet to come, and it will come when it is universally recognised that our legislator should be a person who has known "real life", and has braved life manfully and nobly, and not any one who can command the longest purse for electioneering campaign. To the true legislator the whole country must be akin to his own family—he represents the idea of kingship: the father of the subject people. The spirit of renunciation, selflessness and sacrifice must be fully ingrained in his nature, the ideals of social service and public reform must be the stirring ideal within him. And above all, he must be the greatest apostle of the average standard of living or the minimum comfort wage being secured to the lowest unit of labour.

To fulfil these qualifications, you may make a number of rules. For instance, the legislator may be a person past the middle age having led a respectable family life of a spotless

character. He must have distinguished himself as a recognised expert in some branch of knowledge. He must retire—renouncing all the sources of income, or if there must be any, it must be devoted to the State or public weal. After serving for at least one term of election, he would still for the rest of his life continue to receive the minimum comfort allowance, and would lead life worthy of example for others, and may be called upon to partake in any deliberations of the Government when so required. He would not be allowed to carry on any other business that may be a source of income to him, but would make education and public reform his sole pastime.

Again for the right exercise of a vote by an individual elector a minimum degree of intellectuality, such as equal to secondary or middle school education, or at least sufficient for newspaper reading must be essential. According to the dictum that 'Democracy must be founded on local self-government,' the primary voters may be required to exercise their right of suffrage on the basis of their personal knowledge of the qualifications of candidates, in whose favour they vote, by making the electoral wards for a local body as small as possible. Canvassing for a candidate in any form may be declared a disqualification. And even a general appeal by way of a political propaganda on party lines may be prohibited. All the political education which the voters may be given may be of a general nature, viz., explaining to them what qualifications their nominees should possess and that they should act on their personal knowledge or at least evidence of general repute which they believe to be well-founded. The primary local bodies thus elected may form a constituent assembly for electing representatives for, say, the *Taluka Board*, the choice of a nomination not being confined to the members of the Constituent Assembly, and similarly the members of the *Taluka Boards* electing representatives for a District Board. There the process of democratic elections should stop, because an average voter cannot be expected to have personal knowledge of another for whom he casts his vote beyond the limits of his *Taluka*.

While it is acknowledged on all hands that party system

in a democratic constitution lends itself to many abuses, the chief ground upon which it is justified is that it keeps the nation's mind alert as discussion within each party brings issues to the forefront, and if there were no party organisations in countries having vast populations, who is to educate public opinion and do the necessary work of stirring up the voters out of their apathy and focussing public opinion to certain purposes : a task very much beyond the individual means and capacities of most of candidates seeking election. This argument in favour of the party system will lose its force in the case of small electoral constituencies. In the words of Bryce:—

“One can imagine a small community in which the citizens know one another so well that they select men for legislature and executive posts on the score of personal merit, and where the legislators are of a value so pure that they debate every question with a sole regard to truth and to the advantage of the State.... One can also imagine that in some far distant future when all experiments have been tried, and nations, weary of politics, wish to settle down to a quiet life, a plan may be devised by which each small community, trusting its local concerns to its most honest and capable men, shall empower them to choose others who will go to some centre where they can deliberate on matters of common concern with other such delegates, party being eliminated, because the questions out of which the only parties arose have become obsolete.”

Moreover, the principle of indirect elections for high positions of power and authority is also liable to much abuse, as we see from our experience of practical politics. It is at this stage, therefore, that we should apply the necessary checks and safeguards with the help of religious principles and men of religion.

Before we make some concrete and practical suggestions, let us first notice in broad outline what are the major evils found rampant in democratic elections for which a cure is to be sought.

Indeed, the credit of 'democracy based on adult franchise' stands so low today that the man in the street treats it as practically synonymous with 'the rule of the rabble or mob-law.'

As was vary aptly observed by Bernard Shaw:

"Government by adult suffrage has made democracy impossible. Now that the political ignorance of Everyman has been enfranchised and added to the political ignorance and folly of Everyman, and Government is by anybody chosen by Everybody, I may be thankful that we are at the mercy of Mr. Winston Churchill rather than of Titus Oates or Horatio Bottomley, to say nothing of living scarecrows."

Democracy, as it was conceived after the French Revolution, has now been tried for about 200 years in Europe and America, and has been found wanting. It has either ended in dictatorships, or a welter of anti-social forces, e.g., corruption, nepotism, cheating, hypocrisy, exploitation of the weak and gangsterism. Everywhere it has brutalised human nature and under-mined all civilisation and religion, and made 'rich richer' and 'poor poorer'. One of its worst features is an unholy combination between 'big business' and the 'professional politician', who manage to control between themselves the press and the platform. Most political writers and thinkers have given their verdict on 'democracy based on adult franchise' as being the cult of incompetence. For instance,

'Democracy is a pleasant form of government in which equality reigns among unequal as well as among equal things.'

—Plato

'The post required a mathematician, it was given to a dancing master. Where merit is despised, there is democracy.'

—Aristotle

'Lycurgus being asked why he, who in other respects appeared to be so zealous for the equal rights of man, did not make his government democratic rather than oligarchy, replied, "Go you and try a democracy in your own house."

—Plutarch

'The principle of democracy is perverted not only when it loses the spirit of equality, but still more when it carries the spirit of equality to an extreme and when every one wishes to be equal to those whom he chooses to govern him. The people are incapable of conducting the administration themselves.'

—Montesquieu

'If there were a people consisting of gods, they would be governed democratically; so perfect a government is not suitable to men.'

—Rousseau

'There cannot be an expert, well managed democracy. if democracy will not allow the expert to do the work which he alone can do.'

—John Stuart Mill

'We settle things by a majority vote, and the psychological effect of doing that is to create the impression that the majority is probably right. Of course, on any fine issue the majority is sure to be wrong. Think of taking a majority vote on the best music. Jazz would win over Chopin. Or on the best novel. Many cheap scribblers would win over Tolstoy. And any day a prize-fight will get a bigger crowd, larger gate receipts and wider newspaper publicity than any new revelation of goodness, truth or beauty could hope to achieve in a century.'

—Rev. Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick.

'Men in community are mostly fools. They are incapable of either governing themselves or choosing leaders to govern them.'

'Democracy ignores the noble silent man who best could serve it, and places powers in the hands of windbags and charlatans.'

—Carlyle

'If I had my way nobody under twenty-eight would have a vote, nor any one over sixty-eight, because the whole burden of life is largely borne by the people between these ages.'

—St. John Ervine

'I could never understand why so much reliance was placed on the strict training of foot-ballers, and why it seemed to be dispensed with in soldiers, statesmen and cooks.'

—Lord Moncroft

'Democracy substitutes election by the incompetent many for appointment by the corrupt few.'

'There is no public enthusiast alive of twenty years' practical democratic experience who believes in the political adequacy of the electorate or of the bodies it elects.'

'If the lesser mind could measure the greater as a footnote can measure a pyramid, there would be finality in universal suffrage. As it is, the political problem remains unsolved.'

—Bernard Shaw

'Politics is the madness of the many for the gain of the few.'

—Alexander Pope

'Politics is the art of looking for trouble, finding it everywhere, diagnosing it wrongly and applying unsuitable remedies.'

—Sir Ernest Benn

'All political parties die at last of swallowing their own lies.'

—John Arbuthnot

'What I, as an old man, long to see is a revival of old-fashioned Liberalism in politics, and of Puritanism in morals.'

—Dr. W. R. Inge

'Legislation becomes a little more than an expression of their frenzy, a series of party measures levelled by one faction against the other. The introduction of a bill is a challenge, the passing of an Act is a victory, definitions which at once damn the legislature and convict the system.'

—Faguet

'The principle of equality which allows every man to arrive at everything, prevents all men from rapid advancement'

—De Tocqueville

According to Burke, equality is a monstrous fiction, with Bentham it is an anarchic fallacy, with Coleridge it is an indefensible proposition. The root cause of the trouble with our democracies is that out of the chaos and camouflage of the most sensational day of the year—that of polling—such a serious august body as the legislature emerges out: the creation of a frantic mob. No wonder, therefore, if very often persons returned as a result of this “free choice” exercised by the people are most deeply immersed or self-centred in their own pursuit of the Mammon than caring very much for the interest of community. Again, evil is further increased by party caucuses of different brands ruling the roost, each in its own way, dividing the whole house into so many warring interests, further characterised by the phenomena of catch-phrases, party slogans, log-rolling, etc. The discipline which the parties impose upon their members. makes them a voting machine. They think in battalions while whips mount guard at every corner to beg, purchase and extort votes. The parties need money for propaganda and the expenses of the election. This opens an opportunity for organised interests to secure indirect political power. Party funds are in fact the plague-spot of democratic politics; through them money talks and too often has the last word. Writing of the ‘Failings of Democracy’ a Professor of Politics, Dr. B. Prasad of Allahabad University, summed up his verdict as follows:—

“Several European countries and above all the United States of America, suffer from unprincipled courtiers of Demos, untiring in their homage to the irrational prejudices and passions of large sections of the population. Everywhere over democracy seems to arise the gaunt spectre of the professional politician whose one aim is money, office and power, who is completely free from moral scruples and who, with keen zest organises deceit, hypocrisy and corruption. Everywhere except in Switzerland and the Scandinavian countries, the plutocrat attempts with varying degrees of success to buy off the voter and the legislator, to control the press and the platform. The fathers of the American Constitution had many misgivings on the score of the ignorance and impulsiveness of democracy, but they do not seem to have entertained any apprehensions from wealth.

Yet it is here that democracy has encountered its greatest danger. In America politics has become a by-word for much that is low or disgraceful in human life and character.'

According to Professor Laski, democracy in U. S. A. is rooted in corruption. For instance, we may quote the following from his work, *'The American Democracy'*—(P. 158).

"I am therefore convinced that no small part of the situation which permits the wide-spread and deep-seated corruption in American cities is due to the framework in which the State legislature is set. No doubt this is only part of the story. Something must be attributed to the large number of immigrants who find the boss and his machine more helpful and friendly than the corporation which employs him or the neighbours among whom he lives. It is the boss who gives him the party or the picnic, who helps him when he is in trouble, who sees that he gets his citizen's papers, who finds a job as stenographer at City Hall for his girl. No one who ever met him will forget Mr. Martin Lomasney, the "Tsar" of the Eighth Ward in Boston. "I think", he said, "there's got to be in every ward somebody that any bloke can come to—no matter what he's done—and get help." That help, of course, is not a gift offered free of charge. It is rooted in corruption, corruption of men, corruption of the institutions men build. It poisons the legislature, the administration, the Courts. It entrenches all sorts of special privilege and vested interest behind walls through which the ordinary man cannot hope to penetrate. It escapes into every nook and cranny of the body politic. And it draws into its net every class in the population, rich and poor alike. It may be a poor pedlar who wants a licence to sell his goods; it may be a street rail road which wants to raise the cost of transportation. I do not think it excessive to say that there is no large city in the United States in which the honesty of the Police force is beyond all question. Nor is it excessive to say that there are few great business organisations which have not, at some time or other, availed themselves of the service of the machine to obtain by corruption, whether of

fraud or of violence, what they could not have obtained by the direct pursuasion of argument."

We have now realised from lessons of history and experience that the abuses to which democracy lends itself give rise to forms of government, known as mobocracy, Fascism, Totalitarian State and Plutocracy. Of these, the last is easily the worst, because while the canker of corruption eats into the vitals of a plutocracy, it nourishes itself on self-deception and hypocrisy, and with outward veneer and polish it passes for a respectable democracy. Why it is the worst is because it postpones the day of its redemption to the farthest limit.

It is, therefore, but natural that we find the democracies of today are not so much concerned in fighting the enemies within their body-politic—those of gross inequalities of wealth and insecurity of employment, of politics without principles, of industry without morality, of pleasure without conscience, and of education that breeds discontent, as in preparing for a crusade on the so-called 'liberty front.' Their wide interest in the liberty of the peoples of the world is too all-engrossing to leave them any time to put their own house in order.

For instance, in one of the public speeches, Mr. Clement Attlee, while he was the British Labour Premier, had observed about U. S. S. R.:

"From the point of view of true Socialism Russia was one of the most backward countries in the world—a collective State, but not a Socialist—a police State, just as Russia was under the Czars."

But his speech was not good enough to call off the dock strike in his own country, and the very next day his Government had to call out the military, the back-bone of the police State, to break the strike: a fine instance, indeed, of pot calling the kettle black!

The last War had demonstrated that there was little to choose between a democracy and a dictatorship as regards civil liberties during War, as a preparation for modern warfare brought about the same results in both the rival camps, viz., a censored press, a large force of secret police, a militarized

education, all-round regimentation, and controls, and an increasing centralisation of political power. The same consequences are bound to follow in any democratic country which runs in the race for armaments, imperialist expansion and power politics. For instance, speaking in one of the annual functions of the Liberty Party in New York, the well-known American writer, Louis Fischer, observed:

"Sometimes the things that are happening in the U. S. A. frighten me as much as anything in the world.....Our people are not as attached to tolerance and free speech as they used to be. We have curtailed the freedom to dissent. The loyalty tests, which are being applied.....mean that we suspect guilt before any guilt could exist. That is the beginning of a terror in this country, and though it is only a beginning, it is grave and sad."

Such are the conditions now existing in that so-called 'land of liberty' under the spell of a cold war with U. S. S. R. that Professor Harold Laski, who was invited by an American University, had to go back without delivering his address simply because the Government did not relish his Socialist views. No wonder, if according to a reliable authority*:

"Students and Professors dare not discuss problems like Capitalism and Communism freely even in the class-room, and military programmes and training have been extended to schools and Colleges, and even the Girls' High Schools have not been left out."

Speaking on 'War-time controls likely in Britain' Mr. Clement Attlee, according to a press report dated, London, January 30, 1951, told the House of Commons as Prime Minister:

"Britain will have to bring back many war-time controls to carry out her new 4,700 million sterling arms programme. Among the controls likely are:—

(i) Compulsory direction of labour from civil work to the arms factories;

*Quoted from an article 'Democracy in Uncle Sams' Own Home' by Principal S. N. Agarwala.

(ii) Control of engagements—meaning that workers will not be allowed to quit their jobs without permission from the Ministry of Labour.

(iii) Dilution of labour—allowing outsiders to skilled industries particularly engineering.

It is useless to further multiply these instances. Suffice to say, there is very little Liberty, Fraternity and Equality to be found outside the written Constitutions of the so-called democratic countries. If Constitution be any test of the civil liberties enjoyed by a people, we find, even the Constitution of U. S. S. R. provides that the right of voting for the Soviets is granted to all citizens over 18 years of age on an equal footing (Vide Arts. 135 and 136). As the power of the 'professional politician' is derived from a labour vote, there cannot be so much exploitation of labour in Russia as the apologists of the Western democracies ever seek to make out.

The last War has exposed, among other things, the dangers of the doctrine of *laissez faire*. Upon it the capitalists had built up their paradise of expansion and exploitation, but the war has shattered the foundations of this economic structure. Under the stress of War the democracies had to abolish war profiteering with a strong hand, and the people have got used to all kinds of economic controls. The success of a Socialist regime in Soviet Russia has introduced a new factor to which no practical politician can shut his eyes. In capitalist society, production is not adjusted to the needs of the community but to the dictates of the market, which, in its turn, reflects not social needs, but the relationship between spending and saving, in other words, the relationship between wages and profits. Therefore, capitalist production is wasteful and planless. In Socialist society, as production has to satisfy the needs of society, it is adjusted to those needs. That is to say, a plan is drawn up in accordance to social needs, and production follows the plan.

The so-called industrial democracies have now got to take a lesson in this respect from the Totalitarian States and will have to set their house in order and recognise that the economic system is meant to subserve the best interest of the nation,

and not meant to exploit the masses. Each country has now got to apply per force drastic measures to so regulate its economic system as would provide healthy employment to all its citizens and avert such catastrophies as the industrial crises. That is bound to be the common future programme of all modern states, and how far a particular state succeeds in solving the problem of unemployment is going to be the acid test by which the mankind will judge the success of any particular kind of "ism" governing that state. The moment you begin to legislate consciously for the amelioration of the lot of the lowest and the weakest class—that of the wage-earners—that is the beginning of Scientific Socialism. As social conscience develops, all civilised peoples and their governments will more and more subscribe to the view put forward by Bernard Shaw: "We cannot afford to have poor people anyhow, whether they be lazy or busy, drunken or sober, virtuous, thrifty or careless, wise or foolish. If they deserve to suffer, let them be made to suffer in some other way; for mere poverty will not hurt them half as much as it will hurt their innocent neighbours. It is a public nuisance as well as a private misfortune. Its toleration is a public crime."

Indeed, to provide employment for all its citizens or else a dole, which means pay without work, ought to be one of the primary duties of a civilised government, and a first charge upon its revenues, and if any popular democratic government fails to discharge that duty it should have no business to exist. Time has gone when politicians could afford to tinker with reforms. The last War has made it plain to everybody that if democracies are to survive, they should lose no time in establishing a welfare state. And in that endeavour they should be prepared to do or die, for if they are overtaken by another industrial crisis, they will also go down the way that the Nazi and Fascist states had gone during the war.

No doubt, in a matter of choice between the various "isms" we cannot have all the nations of the world cast in one model, as we must recognise that each nation has an individuality of its own and must evolve along the lines of its

peculiar genius. It must be for the statesmen of a country to pick and choose between Reconstructed Capitalism, or National Socialism, or Communism, and adopt and adapt what they deem to be suited to the requirements and the peculiar genius of the country. But the broad facts remain that a welfare state cannot be based on the exploitation of the many by a few living in riotous luxury; that penury and want cannot be abolished unless the 'haves' are prepared to share with the 'have-nots' the benefits of large-scale production of wealth brought about by scientific advancement; that in any scheme of planning the profit motive as an incentive to industrial progress will have to be abandoned to a large extent; and that any scheme of reconstruction or planning is bound to increase public control over certain basic industries even to the extent of transfer of ownership. It is for the so-called experts and statesmen of each country to consider whether they accept the view of G. B. Shaw who advocates that "the only satisfactory plan is to give everybody an equal share no matter what sort of a person she is, or how old she is, or what sort of work she does, or who or what her father was," and yet warns us against the error of expropriating the possessing class without giving them adequate compensation, or that of H. G. Wells, who had laid down before the last War his minimum of reform as "the determination to replace private, local and national ownership of at least credit, transport, and staple production by a responsible world directorate serving the common ends of the race."

Indeed, there can be no civilisation worth the name based on "self-interest." Comparing democracies with the Communist State of Russia, Aldous Huxley makes a very instructive analysis in his work *"Ends And Means"* (P. 19):

"Consider, by way of example, the recent history of that main source of evil, the lust for power, the craving for personal success and dominance. In this context we may describe the passage from mediaeval to modern conditions as a passage from violence to cunning, from the conception of power in terms of military prowess and the divine right of aristocracy to its conception in terms of finance. In the earlier period the sword and the patent of nobility

are at once the symbols and the instruments of domination. In the later period their place is taken by money. Recently the lust for power has come to express itself once again in ways that are almost mediaeval. In the Fascist States there has been a return towards rule by the sword and by divine right. True, the right is that of self-appointed leaders rather than that of hereditary aristocrats, but still it is essentially divine. Mussolini is infallible; Hitler, appointed by God. In collectivised Russia a system of State capitalism has been established. Private property of the means of production has disappeared and it has become impossible for individuals to use money as a means for dominating their fellows. But this does not mean that the lust for power has been suppressed; rather it has been deflected from one channel to another channel. Under the new regime the symbol and the instrument of power is political position. Men seek not wealth, but a strategic post in the hierarchy. How ruthlessly they would fight for these strategic posts was shown during the treason trials of 1956 and 1957. In Russia, and to a certain extent in the other dictatorial countries, the situation is very similar to that which existed in the religious orders, where position was more important than money. Among the Communists ambition has been more or less effectively divorced from avarice, and the lust of power manifests itself in a form which is, so to say, chemically pure."

We may now suggest the following curative measures. For instance, we may call upon such of the members of the District Boards and City Corporations as may be willing to subscribe to a vow of renunciation of private property and of dedication of the rest of their lives to public service to declare themselves. We may also require them to be highly educated persons. To their number let us add such other representatives and nominees of other electoral Colleges, such as Universities and recognised cultural societies as may be willing to subscribe to similar vows.

Let us next get together a high-powered body composed of the most saintly persons that we can find as representatives of the various religions believing in universal brother-hood

of man to supervise the entire process of elections. Under their supervision we may pick out the necessary number of legislators for the Provincial or State legislatures by means of drawing of lots from among those that have volunteered themselves and taken the vows of renunciation and dedication. Similarly, out of the representatives of the State legislatures the Commission may pick out the necessary number for the national Parliament, and from out of the numbers of the national Parliament to international Parliament by drawing up of lots.

Just because in the present system the money-power as well as the political power is concentrated in one and the same hand, that termed the possessing or capitalist class, the almighty Dollar becomes the *summum bonum* of our life, which is no longer inspired by any high ethical conception of social justice in which an Oriental so persistingly pins his faith in spite of the inequalities of possession which he all the same maintains outwardly. He, in order to affirm his faith from time to time in his ethical conception of life, would often renounce all his wealth and possessions, it is his so-called sacrifice on the altar of truth for self-purification of the Spirit.

The Oriental believes in cultivating leisure to devote it to a quiet contemplation of the Spirit, which, he knows, will give him enlightenmet and bliss, such as no amount of wealth can purchase. He has likewise traditionally imbibed a love of nature and natural living, and has learnt to cultivate the simple joys of life lived near to nature. That is why he is not impressed by the modern craze for a speed-whirl life of the West ; and its hurly-burly, clap-trap and jazz leave him cold. Above all, he cannot reconcile himself to its madcap chaotic race for production, in which every one is free to take part, as according to his views of civilized life, the young and the old as well as women should keep away from the race; and while the youth may devote themselves to acquisition of knowledge and the old to a realization of the Spirit, the women should devote themselves to the arts of consumption and the functions of motherhood. It is a special tradition of the East to inculcate a deep conviction in the virtue of being, what they call, right-minded or fair-minded above everything and at all costs. There is one more

bright jewel in the genius of the East, which is the universal application of the Law of the Golden Mean, as contrasted with the more logical mind of the West, always tending to carry conclusions to either extremes—for instance, either to think of pain-economy or pleasure-economy: to think of being thrown on natural subsistence by being reduced to first principles of living, or to indulge in sensuous and riotous luxuries; either of perfect equality or greatest and endless inequalities. To the Oriental, however, the right means the “rectus” or the golden mean—for instance, living of life near to nature is encouraged, yet not too near; a marvellous simplicity in production exists until today in the handicraft arts and industries, yet producing the best specimen of art and the most comfortable equipments of life that machinery has yet produced; keeping trade and production free and open for private competition, yet enjoining production on a scale above a certain limit by the community or the guild; again allowing interest as justifiable income, but prohibiting not only usury but also its permanence by applying the law of “*Damdapat*,” again allowing the State to exist but decentralising its machinery of government by instituting autonomous village communities, similarly within the village community laying two important intermediate landmarks between the community and the individual—that of the trade-guild and the joint family. We can multiply any number of instances of this genius of the East to fix the two limits between which a sane, normal, healthy development of man and human institutions can best take place—in short, instead of carrying individualism or utilitarianism too far, as is the chronic malady of the present day, the East has applied communistic principles to individualism, which is the same thing as counteracting the lower nature by giving touches of idealism of the higher. In the words of Padma Bhushan Dr. Radhakamal Mukerji (P. 52, Vol. II, *Principles of Comparative Economics*, P. S. King) :—

“The East would work at the sources. The West would patch up and tinker the results which are caused by bad conditions and which cannot be avoided unless the conditions are themselves rectified....The East would

work on the roots of the disease and at the best prevent diseases altogether. A healthy and efficient body economic does not need any medicines like social legislation or a surgical operation that Socialism aspires to execute."

By way of illustration we may quote the following from the pen of Mr. Hugh Gaitskell, leader of the British Labour Party, writing in the *'Daily Herald'* :—

"It's a scandal that in the 1960's we should still have two or three million people living in SLUMS. And they are being cleared at a rate that means that the job won't be finished—unless there is a speed-up—until 1991, by which time we shall have a lot more to clear....

"The system of inheritance, the evasion of death duties, the accumulation of untaxed capital profits—that is why, despite all reforms, really half the private wealth of the country is still owned by one per cent of the population....

"And the philosophy of "grab all you can for yourself and never mind about the other fellow"—the essence of free-for-all—creates an atmosphere in which you just cannot get a real national effort and a real sense of national purpose....

"The British Labour Party is a Democratic Socialist Party. Its central ideal is the brotherhood of man. Its purpose is to make that ideal a reality everywhere." This is how our last Statement of Aims begins.

"Everything else really follows from it....

"A *Society* where men and women treat each other as equals and judge each other on merits.

"A *Society* where class divisions have disappeared and the false values of snobbery cease to exist.

"A *Society* where, because of a far greater sense of unity and a rational economic order, wide industrial expansion is achieved.

"A *Society* where people live in dignity and freedom, developing to the full the personalities and talents with which they are endowed, thus finding happiness in a thousand different ways.

"That is what we seek to create. We know that our journey is long and difficult, and there will be set-backs as well as triumphs.

"But we are sustained always with the conviction that what we are striving for is the goal of all humanity."

In his learned exposition of the Communalistic philosophy of India, Prof. Dr. Radhakamal Mukerji sums up the fundamental difference between the Western and the Eastern outlook on life as follows :—(*ibid.* Vol. I, P. 295)

"Western economics tells us that economic life and activity operate under three conditions, the State, private property and competition. The economic field is considered to be a closed list, surrounded by the impregnable forts represented by the rigid and crystallised institutions of private property and the State. Till the latter half of the nineteenth century the economists occupied the supreme seat of the judge of the tournament. He had bound the hands of the State in fetters of his inexorable doctrine of *laissez faire* so that the confusion, the combat, and the death in the melee within the enclosure went unheeded. The victors were rewarded with golden band, and the spectators cheered the victors among grave noddings of the judges and the united applause of the multitude. But the age of chivalry is gone. The impregnable forts have been demolished. The police State does not stand by unconcerned but frames rules for those who enter the lists. It aspires to become the Socialistic and even the paternal State. Yet the tournament continues though the forts crumble down, and the brazen and iron laws, the barriers of the lists, are over-thrown. And the economist will not desert his post. He hurls anathemas—'the sins of legislators', 'the evils of State interference, the vices of fraternalism and humanitarianism, the sins of private charity, 'Panmixa' or degeneration, and other

such curses of his school against those who are intruders; while the Queen of the tournament also allures by her smiles; and her smiles are the blandishments of a sense-born art, she smiles and she beckons, for she is the Siren of a faithless commerce. She exhibits her jewels,—and there are kingdoms and empires for the victors.

“But the East, the Mother of races and religions, would build a sanctuary. The East knows nothing of chivalry and tournaments. In the shadow of the glacier-clad Himalayas, with the waves of the ocean beating on the southern shores, she has dreamt dreams other than those of the allurements of the senses. She has dreamt not of wealth and possessions, not of power and pomp. The East has through ages loved creation and renunciation more than wealth and efficiency. The civilisation of the East has developed the instincts and desires to create and distribute rather than to appropriate and exploit. The instincts to create and distribute are essentially harmonious, thus the East has sought to avoid conflict. The Socialistic State and private property are the great embodiments of the principles of appropriation and possession in the West. A decentralised polity and communalism are the great embodiment of the opposite principles in China and India.”

Thus we see that it is not possible to spiritualise our politics without spiritualising our economics. Religion makes an appeal to our possessing or capitalist class only so long as property is held sacred and inviolate. Whereas the Socialist doctrine is, as Rodbertus says, ‘Property is theft’, True Religion teaches that it is to be deemed to be of the nature of a trust. That is the Dharma of the so-called capitalist class. The real disease lies in “possession,” in our reliance on property and not on Providence. So long as possession, personal or State, is held sacred, centralisation and violence and inequalities are inevitable. If it is not held sacred; an ordered life and civilisation will be difficult to obtain, as human nature cannot be reformed in a day. We have, therefore, to strike a mean. While it is for the Kshatriya Order, the Government to decentralise the political

machinery of the State, and apply Socialistic checks as stated above, we should build up the largest Brahmanaic Order, that of the Personality group—those who set an example of perfect renunciation and dedication to a religious life, and they should be called upon to lay down the law in the Assembly of Nations.

In a booklet, "*What Jesus means to me*" Mahatma Gandhi wrote:

"St. Mark has vividly described the scene. Jesus is in his solemn mood. He is earnest. He talks of eternity. He knows the world about him. He is himself the greatest economist of his time. He succeeded in economizing time and space—he transcends them. It is to him at his best that one comes running, kneels down, and asks:

"Good Master, What shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?"

And Jesus said unto him: "Why callest thou me Good? There is none good but one, that is God. Thou knowest the Commandments. Do not commit adultery; Do not kill; Do not steal; Do not bear false witness; Defraud not; Honour thy father and mother."

And he answered and said unto him: "Master, all these have I observed from my youth." Then Jesus beholding him loved him and said unto him: "One thing thou lackest. Go thy way, sell whatever thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven—come, take up the cross and follow me."

And he was sad at that saying and went away grieved, for he had great possession. And Jesus looked round about and said unto the disciples: "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God." And the disciples were astonished at his words. But Jesus answereth again and said unto them:

"Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God. It is easier for a camel

to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God!"

Here you have an eternal rule of life stated in the noblest words the English language is capable of producing. But the disciples nodded unbelief as we do to this day. To him they said as we say today: "But look how the law fails in practice. If we sell and have nothing, we shall have nothing to eat. We must have money or we cannot even be reasonably moral."

So they state their case thus. And they were astonished out of measure, saying among themselves 'Who then can be saved?'

And Jesus looking upon them said, "With men it is impossible, but not with God, for with God, all things are possible."

Then Peter began to say unto him: "Lo, we have left all, and have followed thee." And Jesus answered and said, "Verily I say unto you, there is no man that has left house or brethren or sisters, or father or mother, or wife or children or lands for my sake and Gospels but he shall receive one hundredfold, now in this time houses and brethren and sisters and mothers and children and land, and in the world to come, eternal life. But many that are first shall be last and the last, first."

'You have here the result or reward, if you prefer the term, of following the law..... Jesus, Mahomed, Buddha, Nanak, Kabir, Chaitanya, Shankara, Dayanand, Ramakrishna were men who exercised an immense influence over, and moulded the character of thousands of men. The world is the richer for their having lived in it. And they were all men who deliberately embraced poverty as their lot.'

True Religion is not interested in disputing the correctness of the objection of the economist that distribution of the wealth of a few cannot do any appreciable good to the many, because the religious ideal is not equal distribution of wealth but renunciation, which may be purely mental—a

mere change in the angle of vision that makes one hold property as a trustee for general welfare. The Vedanta doctrine is laid down in the following text:—

ईशावास्यम् इदं सर्वं यत् किं च जगत्यां जगत् ।
तेन त्यक्तेन भुञ्जथा मागृधः कस्य स्विद् धनम् ॥ १ ॥
कुर्वन्नेह कर्माणि जिज्ञासिषेच्छन्त समाः ।
एवं त्वयि तान्यथे तोऽस्ति न कर्म लिप्यते नरे ॥ २ ॥

“May all this be enveloped by the Lord,
Each moving thing in this moving world;
Thus renounced, enjoy:
Covet not anybody’s wealth,
Ye, performing Karma here,
Desire to live a hundred years.
Thus for thee there is no way other than this,
Whereby Karma may not cling to thee.”

(*Ishopnishad* (1-2) & *Yajur Veda* (XL. 1. 2))

As explained by Swami Vivekananda:

“We have to cover everything with the Lord Himself..... by really seeing God in everything. Thus we have to give up the world, and when the world is given up, what remains? God. What is meant.....The whole world is full of the Lord. Open your eyes and see Him. That is what Vedanta teaches.....The world we have been thinking of so long, the world to which we have been clinging so long, is a false world of our own creation. Give that up; open your eyes and see that as if it never existed; it was a dream, *Maya*. What existed was the Lord Himself. It is He who is in the child, in the wife, and in the husband; it is He who is in the good, and in the bad; He is in the sin, and in the sinner; He is in life, and in death.

“The cause of all miseries from which we suffer is desire. You desire something, and the desire is not fulfilled; the result is distress. If there is no desire, there is no suffering.....We all understand that desires are wrong, but what is meant by giving up desires? How could life go on? It would be the same suicidal advice, killing the desire

and the man too; the solution is this: Not that you should not have property, not that you should not have things which are necessary, and things which are even luxuries. Have all that you want and more, only know the truth and realize it. Wealth does not belong to anybody. Have no idea of proprietorship, possessorship. You are nobody, nor am I, nor any one else. All belong to the Lord, because the opening verse told us to put the Lord in everything. God is in the wealth that you enjoy. He is in the desire that rises in your mind. He is in the things you buy to satisfy your desire. He is in your beautiful attire, in your beautiful ornaments. This is the line of thought. All will be metamorphosed as soon as you begin to see things in that light. If you put God in your every movement, in your conversation, in your form, in everything, the whole scene changes, and the world, instead of appearing as one of woe and misery, will become a heaven. "The kingdom of heaven is within you," says Jesus; so says the Vedanta, and every great teacher.

"If we understand the giving up of the world in its old, crude sense, then it would come to this: that we must not work, that we must be idle, sitting like lumps of earth, neither thinking nor doing anything, but must become fatalists, driven about by every circumstance, ordered about by the laws of nature, drifting from place to place. That would be the result. But that is not what is meant. We must work. Ordinary mankind, driven everywhere by false desires, what do they know of work? The men propelled by his own feelings and his own senses, what does he know about work? He works, who is not propelled by his own desires, by any selfishness whatsoever. He works who has no ulterior motive in view. He works, who has nothing to gain from work.....

"When we have given up desires, then alone shall we be able to read and enjoy the universe of God. Then everything will become deified. Nooks and corners, byways and shady places, which we thought dark and unholy, will be all deified. They will all reveal their true nature, and we shall smile at ourselves, and think that all this weeping

and crying has been but child's play, and we were only standing by, watching.....

"God is in everything, where else shall we go to find Him? He is already in every work, in every thought, in every feeling. Thus knowing, we must work, this is the only way, there is no other. The effects of Karma will not bind us. We have seen how false desires are the cause of all the misery and evil we suffer, but when they are thus deified, purified, through God, they bring no evil, they bring no misery. Those who have not learnt this secret will have to live in a demoniacal world until they discover it. Many do not know what an infinite mine of bliss is in them, around them, everywhere; they have not yet discovered it. What is a demoniacal world? The Vedanta says, Ignorance.

"We are dying of thirst sitting on the banks of the mightiest river. We are dying of hunger near heaps of food. Here is the blissful universe, yet we do not find it. We are in it all the time, and we are always mistaking it. Religions propose to find this out for us. The longing for this Blissful Universe is in all hearts. It has been the search of all nations, it is the one goal of religion, and the ideal is expressed in various languages in different religions.....

"They grope in darkness who worship this ignorant world, the world that is produced out of ignorance But he who knows the secret of nature, seeing that which is beyond nature through the help of nature, he crosseth death, and through the help of That which is beyond nature, he enjoys Eternal Bliss.

"Men of childish intellect, ignorant persons, run after desires, which are external, and enter the trap of far-reaching death, but the wise, understanding immortality, ever seek for the Eternal in this life of finite things.

"This world is nothing. It is at best only a hideous caricature, a shadow of the Reality. We must go to the Reality. Renunciation will take us to it. Renunciation is the very basis of our true life; every moment of goodness and real life that we enjoy, is when we do not think of

ourselves. This little separate self must die. Then we shall find that we are in the Real, and that Reality is God, and He is our own true nature, and He is always in us and with us. Let us live in Him and stand in Him. It is the only joyful state of existence. Life on the plane of the Spirit is the only life, and let us all try to attain to this realization.

"The question is, that if all this be true, that that Pure One, the Self, the Infinite, has entered all this, how is it that He suffers, how is it, that He becomes miserable, impure? He does not, says the Upanishad,

"As the sun is the cause of the eye-sight of every being, yet it is not made defective by the defect in any eye, even so the Self of all is not affected by the miseries of the body, or by any misery that is around you."

I may have some disease, and see everything yellow, but the sun is not affected by it.

"Infinite pleasure is not to be got through the senses, or, in other words, the senses are too limited, and the body is too limited to express the Infinite. To manifest the Infinite through the finite is impossible, and, sooner or later, man learns to give up the attempt to express the Infinite through the finite. This giving up, this renunciation of the attempt, is the background of ethics. Renunciation is the very basis upon which ethics stands. There never was an ethical code preached which had not renunciation for its basis.....

"When all the desires of the heart will be vanquished, then this very mortal will become immortal;" then the very man will become God.....

"Perfection is not to be attained, it is already within us. Immortality and bliss are not to be acquired, we possess them already; they have been ours all the time."

What the world needs today to establish world-wide spirituality and to draw mankind away from a materialistic outlook is God-men or spiritually advanced personalities, blessed

with an intuitive vision, who can show us the way and can demonstrate by their conduct and way of living the fundamental assertions of all religions that there is a real underlying unity behind apparent diversity; that while the unity is real, all separateness or diversity is Maya or delusion; that while the forces of unselfishness and love are real and abiding, their opposites, all forms of selfishness, discord and hatred are unreal and based on Maya or delusion. If these fundamental religious verities cannot be established in a manner so as to be acceptable to our intellect, the cry of religion is a cry in the wilderness. It is just here that the Vedanta comes to the rescue of all religions. As observed by Swami Vivekananda:

"It is through the heart that the Lord is seen, and not through the Intellect. The intellect is only the street-cleaner, cleaning the path for us, a secondary worker, the policeman; but the policeman is not a positive necessity for the workings of society.....It is feeling that works, that moves with speed infinitely superior to that of electricity or anything else. Do you feel?—That is the question. If you do, you will see the Lord. It is the feeling that you have today that will be deified raised to the highest platform, until it feels everything, the One-ness in everything; till it feels God in itself and in others. The intellect can never do that....."

"What we really want is head and heart combined. It is through the heart that come the great inspirations of life. I would a hundred times rather have a little heart and no brain, than be all brains and no heart. Life is possible, progress is possible, for him who has heart, but he who has no heart and only brains, dies of dryness. °"

"At the same time we know that he who is carried along by his heart alone, has to undergo many ills, for now and then he is liable to tumble into pitfalls. The combination of head and heart is what we want. I do not mean that a man should compromise his heart for his brain or *vice versa*, but let every one have an infinite amount of heart and feeling and at the same time an infinite amount of reason....."

"In Buddha, we had the great, universal heart, and infinite patience, making religion practical, and bringing it to every one's door. In Sankaracharya, we saw tremendous intellectual power, throwing the searching light of reason upon everything. We find today that bright sun of intellectuality joined with the heart of Buddha, the wonderful, infinite heart of love and mercy. This union will give us the highest philosophy. Science and religion will meet and shake hands. Poetry and philosophy will become friends. This will be the religion of the future, and if we can work it out, we may be sure that it will be for all times and peoples. This is the one way that will prove acceptable to modern science, for it has almost come to that. When the scientific teacher asserts that all things are the manifestations of one force, does it not remind you of the God of whom you hear in the Upanishad: "As the one fire entering into the universe expresses itself in various forms, even so that one soul is expressing itself in every soul, and yet it is infinitely more besides....."

"What is now wanted is a combination of the greatest heart with the highest intellectuality, of infinite love with infinite knowledge. The Vedantist gives no other attributes to God except these three—hat He is Infinite Existence, Infinite Knowledge and Infinite Bliss, and he regards these three as one. Existence, without Knowledge, and Love cannot be, Knowledge without Love, Love without Knowledge, cannot be. What we want is the harmony of Existence, Knowledge and Bliss Infinite. For that is our goal. We want harmony, not one-sided development. And it is possible to have the intellect of a Samkara with the heart of a Buddha. I hope we shall all struggle to attain that combination."

"I have seen some scientists," says Swami Vivekananda, "who are equally practical, both as scientists and as spiritual men, and it is my great hope that, in course of time, the whole of humanity will be efficient in the same manner. When a kettle of water is coming to the boil, if you watch the phenomenon, you find, first, one bubble is rising, and then another, and so on, until at last they all join and a.

tremendous commotion takes place. This world is very similar. Each individual is like a bubble, and nations resemble many bubbles. Gradually these nations are joining, and I am sure the day will come when separation will vanish, and that Oneness to which all are going will become manifest. A time must come when every man will be as intensely practical in the scientific world as in the spiritual, and that Oneness, the harmony of Oneness, will pervade the whole world. The whole of mankind will become '*Jivanmuktas*,' Free whilst living. We are all struggling towards that one end through our jealousies and hatreds, through our love and co-operation. A tremendous stream is flowing towards the ocean, carrying us all along with it; and though, like straws and scraps of paper, we may at times float aimlessly about, in the long run, we are sure to join the ocean of Life and Bliss."

In one of his lectures Swami Ram tirtha of blessed memory, himself a saint and practical Vedantist, narrated a story of Alexander, the Great and a *Jivanmukta* (Free while living) as follows:—

"Here is a saint whose soul was rich.....who had realized the richness and glory of his Self (the Atman). Besides him stood Alexander, the Great, who wanted to hide his inner poverty. Look at the beaming countenance of the saint, the happy, joyful face of the saint. Alexander the Great was struck by his appearance. He fell in love with him and just asked the saint to come with him to Greece. The saint laughed and his answer was, "The world is in Me. The world cannot contain Me. The universe is in Me. I cannot be confined in the universe. Greece and Rome are in Me. The suns and stars rise and set in Me."

'Alexander the Great, not being used to this kind of language, was surprised. He said, "I will give you riches. I will just flood you with worldly pleasures. All sorts of things that people desire, all sorts of things which captivate and charm people will be in wild profusion at your service. Please accompany me to Greece."

'The saint laughed, laughed at his reply and said, "There is not a diamond, there is not a sun or star which shines,

but to Me is due its lustre. To Me is due the glory of all the heavenly bodies. To Me is due all the attractive nature, all the charms of the things desired. It would be beneath My dignity, it would be degrading on My part, first, to lend the glory and charm to those objects, and then go about seeking them, to go begging at the door of worldly riches, to go begging at the door of flesh and animal desires to receive pleasures, happiness. It is below my dignity. I can never stoop to that level. No, I can never go begging at their doors."

'This astonished Alexander, the Great. He just drew his sword and was going to strike off the head of the saint. And again the saint laughed a hearty laugh and said, "O Alexander, never in your life did you speak such a falsehood, such an abominable lie. Kill me, kill me, kill me ! What is the sword that can kill Me? Where is the weapon that can wound Me? Where is the calamity that can mar My cheerfulness? Where is the sorrow that can tamper with My happiness? Everlasting, the same yesterday, today, and for ever, pure and holy of holies, the Master of the universe, that I am, that I am. Even in your hands I am the power that makes them move, O Alexander. If my body dies, there I remain, the power that makes your hands move. I am the power that makes your muscles move." The sword fell down from the hands of Alexander.

'Here we see that there is only one way of making people realize the spirit of renunciation. We become ready to renounce everything only when we become rich in Self-realization. The outward renunciation can be achieved when inward perfection, inward mastery or kingdom is attained. No other way."

The characteristics of a *Jivanmukta* are described by Sage Dattatreya, himself a *Jivanmukta*, in his '*Jivanmukta-Gita*' as follows:—

जीवः गिवः सर्वमेव भूतेष्वेवं व्यवस्थितः ।

एक मेवाभिपश्यन् हि जीवन्मुक्तः च उच्यते ॥

"He is called a *Jivanmukta* who perceives with sameness of vision the One Infinite seated in the Jiva and Siva and in all beings.

एवं ब्रह्म जगत्सर्वमखिलं भासते रविः ।
संस्थितं सर्वं भूतानां जीवन्मुक्तः स उच्यते ॥

“He is called a Jivanmukta who sees the One Brahman which, seated in all beings, illumines the whole world, like the sun.”

एकधा बहुधा चैव दृश्यते जल चन्द्रवत् ।
आत्मज्ञानी तथैवेको जीवन्मुक्तः स उच्यते ॥

“He is called a Jivenmukta who, through the knowledge of the Self, realises that the One appears as the many, like the moon reflected in different receptacles of water.”

सर्वभूतेस्थितं ब्रह्म भेदाभेदो न विद्यते ।
एवमेवाभिपश्यंश्च जीवन्मुक्तः स उच्यते ॥

“He is called a Jivanmukta who, seeing the One Brahman existing in all beings, does not perceive any difference.”

चिन्मयं व्यापितं सर्वमाकाशं जगदीश्वरम् ।
सहितं सर्वभूतानां जीवन्मुक्तः स उच्यते ॥

“He is called a Jivanmukta who sees everything as filled with the One Consciousness which is the Ruler of all, and which is all-pervading like ether.”

अनाविवर्ती भूतानां जीवः शिवो न हन्यते ।
निर्वैरः सर्वभूतेषु जीवन्मुक्तः स उच्यते ॥

“He is called a Jivanmukta who, seeing that the Jiva which is identical with Siva (Brahman) exists eternally, does not create enmity with any being.”

आत्मां गुरुश्च विश्वं च चिदाकाशो न लिप्यते ।
गतागतं द्वयं नास्ति जीवन्मुक्तः स उच्यते ॥

“He is called a Jivanmukta who knows that Self, the Guru, the universe are all the taintless Ether of Consciousness and that nothing actually comes or goes.”

अभ्यासे रमते नित्यं ध्यातलयं गतम् ।
बन्धमोक्ष द्वयं नास्ति जीवन्मुक्तः स उच्यते ॥

“He is called a Jivanmukta who has neither bondage nor liberation, and whose mind ever takes delight in being merged in the practice of meditation.”

एकाकी रमते नित्यं स्वभाव गुण वर्जितः ।
ब्रह्मज्ञान रमास्वादी जीवन्मुक्तः स उच्यते ॥

"He is called a Jivanmukta who partakes of the essence of the bliss of Brahman, and rejoices alone, and for ever, being devoid of habits, natures, etc.

जाग्रत्स्वप्न सुषुप्तिश्च तुरीया वस्थितं सदा ।
सोहं मनो विलायेत जीवन्मुक्तः स उच्यते ॥

"He is called a Jivanmukta who has transcended the waking, dreaming and sleeping states, and is established in the Eternal Consciousness of Self-identity."

सोऽहं स्थितं ज्ञानमिदं सूत्रेषु मणिवत् स्थिरम् ।
सोऽहं ब्रह्म निराकारं जीवन्मुक्तः स उच्यते ॥

"He is called a Jivanmukta who realises his being the Pure Consciousness which connects all beings as a thread connects all pearls, and his being the attributeless Brahman."

योगाभ्यासी मनः श्रेष्ठो अन्तस्त्यागी वहिर्जडः ।
अन्तस्त्यागी बाहिस्त्यागी जीवन्मुक्तः स उच्यते ॥

"He is called a Jivanmukta whose mind practises the highest Yoga who has internally renounced everything, but appears inert outside, and who has abandoned everything internal and external."

Says the Egyptian Master, *Junnuna Misri*:

"Two marks there be of him who is a true lover of the Lord:—

- (1) He is stable in censure and praise; and
- (2) he does his duty without a desire for fruit."

So also says the *Bhagavad Gita*:—

"When a man completely casts off, O Partha, all the desires of the mind, and is satisfied in the Self by the Self, then, he is said to be sage of steady wisdom (sthitaprajna)." (II/55)

"He, whose mind is not shaken by adversity, who does not hanker after pleasures, who is free from attachment, fear and anger, is called a sage of steady wisdom." (II/56)

"He who is everywhere without attachment, on meeting with anything good or bad, who neither rejoices nor hates—his wisdom is fixed." (II/57)

"When, like the tortoise which withdraws on all sides its limbs, he withdraws his senses from the sense-objects, then, his wisdom becomes steady." (II/58)

"Heaving restrained them (senses) all, he should sit steadfast, intent on Me; his wisdom is steady whose senses are under control." (II/61)

In the Vedantic literature a *Jivanmukta* is variously called as a *Sihithaprajna*, *Paramhamsa*, *Videhmukta* and *Purushottama*.

Says the *Paramhamsopanishad*:

"The Paramhamsa carries neither the staff, nor the hair tuft, nor the holy thread, nor any covering. He feels neither cold nor heat, neither pleasure nor sorrow, neither honour nor dishonour, etc. He is beyond the reach of the six waves (hunger, thirst, grief, delusion, disease and death) of this world-ocean. Having given up all thought of calumny, pride, jealousy, ostentation, arrogance, attachment of antipathy, joy and sorrow, lust, anger, avarice, self-delusion, elation, envy, egoism and the like, he regards his body as a corpse, as he has thoroughly destroyed the body-idea. Ever free from the cause of doubt and of false knowledge and realising the eternal Self, he lives in the consciousness: "I myself am He. I am that which is ever serene, unchangeable, undivided and of the essence of Knowledge-Bliss. That alone is my real nature."

Sri Samkara also declares that a person can be liberated in this very life, and lays down the characteristics of a *Jivanmukta* in '*Viveka Chudamani*' (Sh. 428-440). For instance, the Shloka 428 says: "He whose illumination is steady, who is always full of bliss, has almost forgotten the phenomenal universe, is accepted as a man liberated in this very life."

Similarly, Shri Rama Gita says:

"He alone is Purushottama who with the help of self-control and such other virtues has attained Self-knowledge

in a spontaneous manner, has no admiration at all for Siddhis (supernatural or miraculous powers) like Anima, etc., does not even smile a little on observing the wonderful creations of the Universal Lord, is not touched by desires even in dreams by the four kinds of salvations like Saulikya, etc., has destroyed the Sarpa-chiita, and is firm in supreme undivided Consciousness, because of his firm conviction that the world is unreal." (IV. 43-46)

"One who has forgotten his body is a Videhmukta, even though he continues to live in his body due to his prarabdha." (V. 8)

As observed by Bharat-Ratna Dr. S. Radhakrishnan in his address to the World Congress of Faiths, held in London:

"Whatever the individual has done the race too may and should eventually succeed in doing. When the incarnation of God is realized not only in a few individuals but in the whole of humanity, we will have a new creation, a new race of men and women, mankind transformed, redeemed and reborn, and a world created new. This is the destiny of the world, the supreme spiritual ideal. It alone can rouse us from cold reason, inspire us with constructive passion and unite us mentally, morally and spiritually in a world fellowship."

The dawn of the new era of spiritual renaissance will come when people take to the practice of non-violence and Yoga. This can best be illustrated by an anecdote given in Valmiki's Ramayan (Uttar Kand) of 'Ram Rajya': the rule of Sri Rama in Tre.a Yuga, which had lasted for about eleven thousand years.* There is nothing to be surprised at in this statement

*The text of Valmiki's Ramayana, Uttarkhand. (civ 11) is as follows:—

काल रामयोः वार्तायाम् । [Talk between Kal (messenger of Death) and Sri Rama]

दश वर्षं सदृक्षाणि, दश वर्षं शतानि च ।

कृत्वा-वासस्य निर्यति स्वमेव आत्म ना पुरा ॥

Says the messenger of Death to Sri Rama:

"At the time of your advent into this world you yourself had fixed the period of your sojourn at 11,000 years."

Sri Rama was crowned at the age of 29 at Chitrakoot.

as the average age of man in the Dwapar Yuga, the epoch before the present Kali Yuga, according to Hindu scriptures, was ten times that of *Kali Yuga*, i.e., 1,000 years; and in the *Treta Yuga* ten times of that i.e., 10,000 years; and in the *Sat Yuga* ten times of that, i.e., one lac years. The age of *Kali Yuga*, the present epoch, is 4,32,000 years, of which only 5,061 years have gone by; that of *Dwapar Yuga* was 8,64,000 of years; that of *Treta Yuga* was 12,96,000 years, and that of *Sat Yuga* was 17,28,000 years.

One cycle of 1,000 such four Yugas makes a Kalpa, which is a day of Brahma's life. We are now running the first day of the 51st year of Brahma's life, called the Sweta Varha Kalpa in the Markandeya Purana. A Kalpa is divided into 14 Manavantras. The current Manvantra is Vaivaswat Manvantra, and the present Kali Yuga is the 28th running in its first quarter and has completed 5061 years of its allotted period of 4,32,000 years.

However, as the story goes, a poor old Brahmin felt greatly annoyed by a dog who came in his way more than once, while he was himself feeling the pinch of poverty and hunger. In an irritable mood he hit the dog on the head with the bamboo-stick in his hand. The dog went to make a complaint of it in the Court of the King Sri Rama, and stood outside the gate of the Assembly Hall where complaints were heard by the King himself aided by assessors who were monks. When all the complaints had been disposed of, the King Sri Rama asked his brother, Prince Lakshman, to see if there was any other complainant waiting outside the gate. Prince Lakshman saw the dog with its fractured skull and asked it if it had any complaint to make. On getting its reply in the affirmative Prince Lakshman informed Sri Rama about the dog. Sri Rama ordered that the dog be brought into the Court room. On hearing its complaint against the Brahmin who had hit the dog without any fault on its part, the Brahmin was immediately summoned. On being asked for his explanation, the Brahmin accused admitted his guilt and expressed his regret. The King called upon the monks to advise him as to the punishment to be awarded, but they expressed their inability to tender any advice in the matter.

Thereupon the King Sri Rama asked the complainant dog what punishment it would like to be given to the accused Brahmin. The dog said, the accused may be installed as the Mahant (head) of a certain *Math*, one of the biggest endowments of the kingdom. The King Sri Rama issued orders accordingly, and at once anointed the Brahmin and sent him away on an elephant with due pomp and show to be installed as a Mahant. After the Brahmin had gone away overjoyed with his great good luck, Prince Lakshman and the Munis of the Court felt greatly amazed at the justice meted out by the King, and could not help asking King Sri Rama if he had actually rewarded the Brahmin instead of punishing him. The King replied, "Ask the complainant dog about this matter." On being questioned, the dog said, "I got the Brahmin installed as the Mahant of the *Math* of which I was myself the Mahant in my last birth. As power and pelf corrupt all men, I have no doubt the Brahmin will also have the same fate in his next birth as I have in my present birth, that is to say, he would also be born as a dog like myself only to receive kicks in the same manner."

The goal of humanity should be to evolve as large a community of Jivanmuktas as possible and submit to their guidance.

As observed by Bharat-Ratna Dr. S. Radhakrishnan*:

"We cannot have a knowledge of God or of the invisible world unless its voice is heard in our own selves. In none of us is the spark of spirit wholly extinct; in none is the image of God wholly effaced. Only the seers in whom the Spirit is not merely a presence but an achievement lend us in their eyes, in Schopenhauer's phrase, and we begin to see with them. They give us the power to know, love and appreciate the world in a new way. We share their vision of life, splendid and sublime, to the best of our capacity. Even as those who appreciate beauty are artists in a degree, so also those who recognise the prophets are prophets of a kind.

*Pp. 208-210, '*An Idealist View of Life*' (George Allen and Unwin)

"All true greatness has this power to illumine us, to transform us, emancipate us, from the low and the petty, the temporary and the expedient. They do not simply please our senses or interest our mind, but touch our soul and change our being. We acquire through their aid a heightened awareness of the meaning of life. There is no more conclusive proof of the reality of the spiritual world than acquaintance with the saints of God. They shake us out of our scepticism. Their lives reveal the truth and they cannot be refuted. Their influence is compulsive for they do not speak as the scribes but as those having authority.

"These geniuses from whose quivering lips ecstatic utterances leap at us give us a foretaste of what all human beings are destined to be. They are the heralds of the infinite, the first fruit of the future man. They and the moods of exaltation they rouse in us are a promise of mankind's future achievement in spiritual understanding. They are the new emergents, the beginnings of a new human species, the "sports" in the biological expression, in which a qualitatively new type is wakened. We have all to be reborn, reveal our potential sonship, share in all the fullness of divine nature, though a long process of development and illumination separates us from that goal. In Buddha and Jesus, the new vision of life, the new unification of nature, inner and outer, has become flesh.

"If we remember the wonders achieved in the course of evolution, the hope is not unreasonable that we may all attain to the greatness these have achieved. It would not have been possible for the Darwinian ape living its instinctive life in the forest to imagine that one day he would himself grow into an animal using a new power of reasoning and dominating the earth and its conditions mental and material, handling natural forces, sailing the seas, and riding the air, and, more than all, controlling its own life by codes of conduct, in domestic, national and international life. Man today finds it equally difficult to imagine that he might himself grow into the divine status, possessing knowledge without a taint of error, bliss without a shadow of suffering, power without its denial of weakness, purity and

plenitude of being without their opposites of defect and limitation. Such an ideal transfiguration of humanity is man's dream of heaven, of the reign of God.....A passage such as that in the eighth chapter of St. Paul's Epistle to the Roman must hearten us. "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us, for the creation with out stretched head awaits the revelation of the Sons of God."

Let us always remember the prophetic statement made by Swami Vivekananda about sixty years ago: 'Everything goes to show that socialism or some form of rule by people, call it what you will, is coming on board. The people will certainly want the satisfaction of their material needs, less work, no oppression, no war, more food. What guarantee have we that this, or any civilization, will last, unless it is based on religion, on the goodness of man? Depend on it, religion goes to the root of the matter. If it is right, all is right.'

According to Valmiki's Ramayana, when Lord Sri Rama was informed on the battle-field that Vibhishan, the brother of Rakshasa King Ravan of Lanka was speaking from the air that he had deserted his brother and was seeking refuge from Sri Rama, all his counsellors advised Sri Rama not to trust a Rakshasa's word, but Lord Sri Rama said,

सकृदेव प्रसन्नाय तवास्मि च याचते ।

अभयं सर्वं भूतेभ्यः ददामि एतद व्रतं मम ॥

"It is My invariable rule that I grant immunity from fear of all beings and all kinds of suffering to one who even once surrenders himself unreservedly and says, "I am yours."

ERRATA

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ROLE OF VEDANTA

'RELIGIOUS DIGEST,' an International Quarterly, Talangama Ceylon, (January—March, 1962 issue) says:

'Role of Vedanta is the title of two Volumes, one with the sub-title 'As Universal Religion', and the other 'As Science of Self-Realisation', by Shri P. M. Verma, M.A., B.Sc. LL B., Advocate, High Court of Judicature at Allahabad and Supreme Court of India.

'In these two compact Volumes, we find the author's deep study, research, reflection and actual experiences of nearly half a century. A lawyer by profession is trained in the work of marshalling his facts and dressing them up for presentation in the best possible manner. This is exactly what the learned author has done in producing these highly instructive publications dealing with all the spiritual literature of ancient and modern India.

'In the Foreword to the first Volume, Shri Sri Prakasa, Governor of Bombay, the talented son of the late Savant, Bharata-Ratna Dr. Bhagavan Das, writes:

"He (the author) has studied carefully the ancient thought of the land, and drunk deep at the fountain of its ancient learning. I am surprised at the insight he has got in the subject, which he presents to the world in his own way."

"The learned author has quoted profusely from the old philosophical works, which is the sacred legacy left to us by our ancestors, and has also referred to European scientists, philosophers and poets to make his arguments and conclusions clear."

"The purpose of the author is a noble one, which can be gleaned from his Preface. He wants the country, in its set-up of freedom, to recover its lost ancient glory."

"This is no exaggeration. One must go through the books to fully understand and appreciate the weight of these remarks.

"The author's Preface itself is an inspiring guide to all earnest seekers after Peace. It echoes the ideas and ideals taught by great Indians like Vivekananda and Gandhi. The concluding paragraph of the Preface deserves to be quoted here. It reads as follows:

"Having achieved Swaraj, if we want our country to attain to her ancient glory, we must lay the foundations of a spiritual democracy in our schools by introducing a course of comparative study of religions, emphasising the essential unity of all religions and the universal principles of ethics and morality."

"These are not books to borrow and read, but to buy, regularly study and apply their teachings to daily life. They are divided into seven Chapters each. The last Chapter of the second Volume forms an Appendix dealing with Metempsychosis, with authenticated evidence relating to cases of people living today with memory of their last births. As the second Volume contains esoteric knowledge, it is not out for sale, but will be supplied free to those who evince sincere interest on the subject, after reading the first Volume.

"Both the Volumes are published by the Indian National Renaissance Society, Mumfordganj, Allahabad-2. The price of the Library Edition of Volume I is Rs. 15/- (India and Ceylon); \$ 5. (U. S. A.) and £ 1. (U. K.).

"The Call Divine' Bombay (February, 1962) says:

"We welcome these two precious volumes on the Role of Vedanta as Universal Religion. The author is a lawyer, a scholar, a seeker, and a modern Thinker, and a devotee of Sree Sree Anandmayee Ma. He stands for Spiritual Democracy. He has collected in the Role of Vedanta a world of information on this paragon of monistic philosophy. He has extensively adapted his chapters from all great scriptures of the world. The chapters on Rational Approach to God, Higher Way of Life, Cosmic Laws, Cosmogony and Evolution, Yoga and Sadhana, Karma and Bhakti and Moksha are very interesting. The author has taken great pains to compile this book. He has done a distinct service in holding the universal Light of Vedanta to the modern scientific age."

"The Voice Universal,' a British Quarterly Journal says:—

"These two excellent books expound the universal truths of Vedanta, conveying spiritual light from the East to the West. They should be extremely valuable to all students of the ancient wisdom and aspirants on the path to reality".

The 'Hindu', Madras, says:—

"Shri Verma must be congratulated on his presentation of the case for Vedanta in the best spirit of understanding. There is hardly any doubt his rich experience that illustrates the testing of the Vedanta in himself will prove a great inspiration to all readers of this work."

The 'Amrita Bazar Patrika', Calcutta, says:—"This book on Vedanta will achieve the purpose for which Mr. Verma has laboured, namely, to bring solace and comfort to the individual who reads it in his sorrows and difficulties. The main object in compiling this work was to collect all necessary informations on the subject at one place for the benefit of those interested in it. Because without getting the entire picture at one place it was not possible to make a head or tail of this vast subject dealing with the Infinite Reality. The author has taken pains to quote from highest and most reliable authorities on the subject.....

"The author is a learned scholar who has proper understanding. He calls "Vedanta" the "Summon Bonum" of all knowledge. His analysis is sound and detailed. The perusal of the book must inspire you...."

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“The author’s knowledge is profound, and he has quoted profusely from our philosophical literature as well as from European scientists, philosophers and poets to make his arguments and conclusions clear. Especially the chapter on ‘Rita, and Dharma—Cosmic Laws’ is illuminating. It has thrown a flood of light on the much maligned Varnasrama, so ancient and so fundamental, which pseudo reformers have attempted to besmirch and belittle.....The book is timely and it is hoped its readers will be many, especially those who guide our educational institutions and leaders of our times, who have a great need to glean from these nuggets of our ancient wisdom.”

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Shri Jia Ram Saxena, Advocate, Bareilly, writes:—

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